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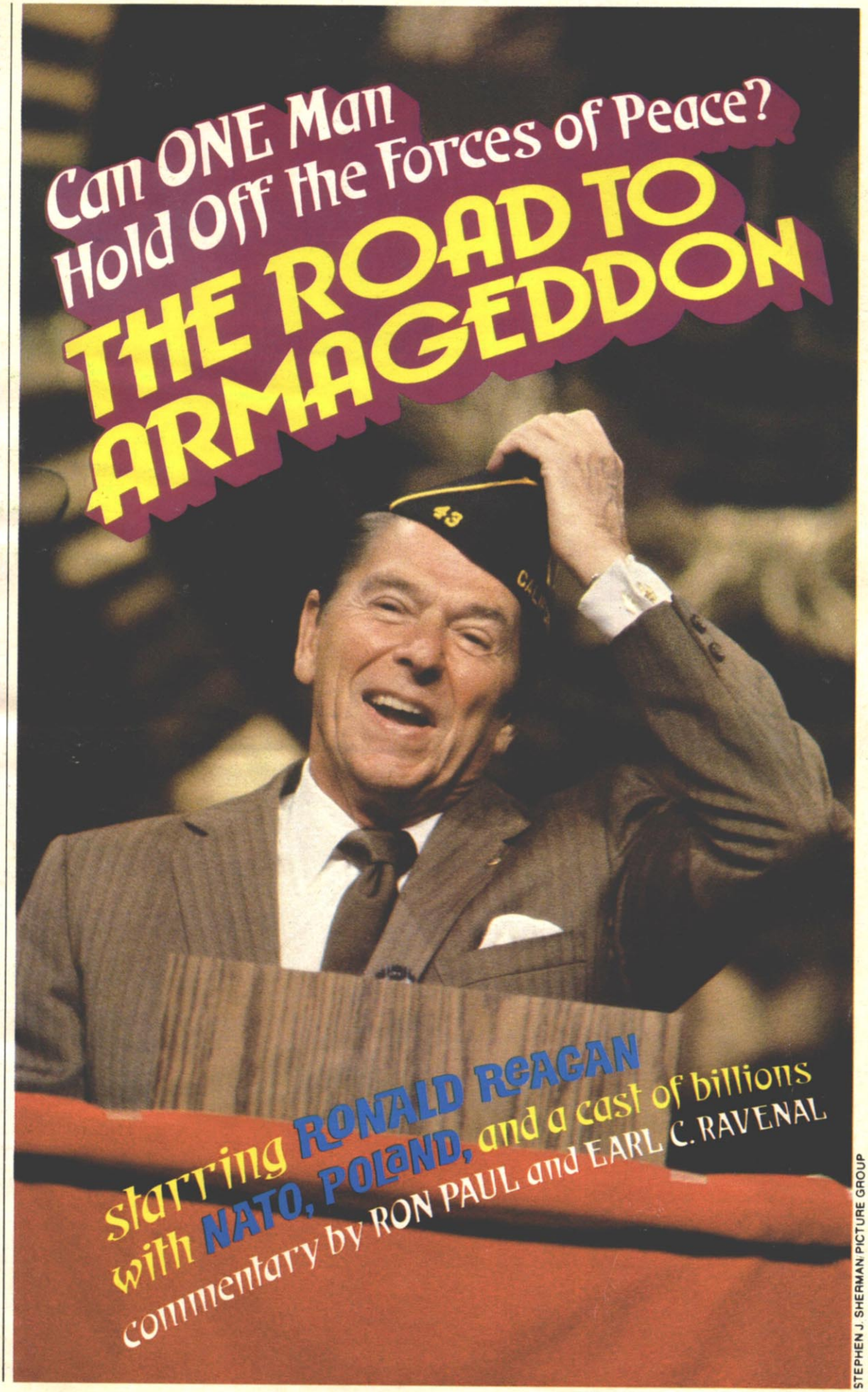
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THE LIBERTARIAN REVIEW

November/ December 1981 Volume 10, No. 11-12 Double Issue

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The Reagan administration's belligerent military stance is creating fear and suspicion in the world's nations and is making nuclear disaster far more likely. *LR*'s analysts discuss the alternatives to neoconservative intervention.

NOTICE

The Libertarian Review will cease publication after this issue. Subscribers will receive *Inquiry* magazine for the number of months remaining on their subscriptions; those who now subscribe to *Inquiry* will have their *Inquiry* subscriptions extended by the number of months remaining on their subscriptions to *The Libertarian Review*. Please direct correspondence on this matter to: Publisher, 1320 G Street S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

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OPENING SHOTS

"IT'S THE NICE MAN FROM THE JOINT CHIEFS, HARVEY— HERE TO SEE ABOUT THE MX BASING MODE AGAIN!"

BILL BIRMINGHAM

WE MUST EMBRACE THE loathsome and costly MX missile because the Soviet Union will soon be able to destroy all (well almost all) of our Minuteman ICBMs in a surprise attack. Or so the Pentagon would have it. Until very recently the Pentagon version was the conventional wisdom, challenged only by a few pointy-headed liberals in the *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* or the *New York Review of Books*, or Jeffrey Rogers Hummel in the May *LR*. But now even the conservative military journal *Strategic Review* denies the existence of a Soviet "threat." Said a recent editorial by Arthur G.B. Metcalf, "Nothing has been put forward which technologically supports the belief that we (or the Soviets) could, with any degree of confidence, expect to hit one silo at ICBM range, let alone 1000 of them distributed over an area equal to one third of the United States." In fine, the Soviet "threat" was never a "substantiated fact" but only an "agreed-upon position" of some military authorities. The Reagan administration is currently thrashing about trying to find some way to make the MX palatable (basing it on airplanes, or at sea; going back to the idea of a "common missile" to be used by both the Air Force and the Navy, etc.), but if there is no threat to American ICBMs, there is no reason to have the MX at all, in any form whatsoever. The problem is that soon so much will have been spent on the MX as to make it unstoppable. Reagan's proposed fiscal 1983 budget, which goes into effect in less than a year, contains $5.9 billion for the MX, including $1.8 billion to buy the first missiles and another $1.8 billion for initial basing.

When a 53-year-old patient wouldn't pay for her dentures, Oklahoma dentist Curtis Brookover knew what to do. Rather than waste time and money on lawsuits and collection agencies, he went straight to Lee Ann Stoval's house, chased her, threw her to the ground and yanked the $600 dentures from her very mouth — suffering a bite on the finger in the process. ("She really did want to keep those teeth," says Dr. Brookover.) Ms. Stoval claims he also bruised her kidney in the process, and is taking the whole case to court. For his part, Dr. Brookover says he will never make dentures on credit again. It's a good thing he took up dentistry instead of heart transplants.

The Federal Election Commission wants Jimmy Carter's reelection committee to repay some $105,000 of the $29.4 million it got from the Treasury; $103,000 of that is for interest earned on government money while it was in the committee's hands. And the Reagan committee is suing the FEC to stop publication of the Reagan audit, claiming "unnecessary and unwarranted exposure" could harm the committee and people connected with it. According to a letter attached to the suit, the Reagan audit may require repayment of over $1.5 million. This sounds like a job for Curtis Brookover.

"Poles yesterday began paying 150 percent more for bread and up to 300 percent more for other grain products," *The Washington Post* reported on September 1, "the biggest price increases for these heavily subsidized staples since the Communists took control of the country after World War II.... The aim is to restructure prices so that it will no longer be economic for private farm-

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ers to feed bread and other processed food products to their animals. Under the previous price system, huge amounts of bread were wasted since it was cheaper than grain." Just another example, apparently, of that famous socialist maxim: Production for (chicken) feed, not for profit.

The same day that *Newsweek* announced that Ronald Reagan is a slothful dullard who only works two or three hours a day and prefers to spend his time reminiscing about Hollywood (which would be wonderful if Haig and Meese didn't take up the slack), Billy Carter announced that *he* thinks Bonzo is just terrific. "He's the first president that has had some control over Congress since Roosevelt," opined the ex-First Brother. "I hope they let him run it for a while." It's a tossup which is worse (or, for the Republic, better): an enemy like *Newsweek,* or a "friend" like Billy.

Margaret Fifer's congressman finally got to hear her views on the burning issues of 1977 when the U.S. Postal Service delivered a questionnaire she had returned four years ago. One of the questions, as it happens, was "Are you getting your money's worth from the Postal Service?" Mrs. Fifer presciently replied: "No."

Non-surprise of the Month Dept.: "Congressional budget analysts anticipate a deficit $15 billion to $20 billion higher than the $42.5 billion for the 1982 fiscal year that has been projected by the Reagan administration ... it [is] highly doubtful that a balanced budget could be achieved by 1984, which is the aim of the administration." (*The New York Times,* August 25, 1981)

Law n' order notes: Explorer Scouts in Ann Arbor, Michigan have been buying liquor in local bars, stores, and restaurants — and then turning the sellers in to police. It's all part of an undercover operation by the Ann Arbor Police Department, which sponsors Explorer Post 155. The operation was not sanctioned by the Wolverine Boy Scout Council, however, so the kids can just forget about getting their Entrapment merit badges. ... As chairwoman of the California State Water Resources Council, Carla Bard is part of "that secret band of robbers and murderers, which call themselves the government" (in the words of Lysander Spooner), and just the sort of dangerous hoodlum that the California anti-switchblade law was meant to disarm. But the Sacramento Sheriff's Department returned her Filipino-style butterfly pocketknife — even though the department declared it an illegal "gravity knife" — on the grounds of her "civic standing." Ms. Bard claims she only uses her shiv "to cut apples for lunch," but we all know how far to trust a bureaucrat. ... In the nation's capital, narcotics officers recently made a heroin bust attired as the Schlitz malt liquor bull. "Don't say law enforcement, say bull" — but in the District of Columbia they've always done that. ... In the ski resort town of Telluride, Colorado, the narcs busted town marshal Hank Smith, who happens to be running for sheriff. Smith has the support of many townspeople, including the mayor, who has declared that the Colorado Organized Crime Strike Force (which arrested Smith as part of its war on drug trafficking in the area) does not have "a right to dictate our lifestyles". ... And Joseph Guillou, a French mechanic aboard the Moroccan oil tanker *Al Ghassani,* was recently arrested in Morocco and charged with blasphemy. According to French labor officials, Guillou replaced a shipboard picture of Moroccan King Hassan II with a large sausage. Of all the outrageous "crimes" in the world, this is clearly the wurst.

According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, "Head lettuce, which is packed or placed in layers in any container, shall not vary in size in any one container more than 15 percent of heads which would fairly tightly pack a size, larger or smaller, than the size which is marked. It shall be fairly tightly packed with the same numerical count of regularly arranged heads in each layer. None of the heads shall be placed outside of the regular arrangement of two uniform flat layers in standard containers .... If, however, 2½ dozen heads of lettuce of the 2½ dozen size when fairly tightly packed in standard containers numbers 45A, 45B or 45E are packed in such containers, six heads of the same size or dimensions as the heads which are contained in the upper and lower layers may be placed between such layers if the upper and lower layers consist of 12 heads each and the total count in the container is 30 heads." Hope this comes in handy when you're tossing your salad.

Salvadoran Notes: According to the *San Francisco Chronicle* (August 28, 1981), the case against the six soldiers who were arrested for the murder of those four American nuns "has become bogged down for lack of evidence." Meanwhile, a wealthy Salvadoran arrested for the January murder of two American "land reform" advisers "has been ordered freed because of inconsistent statements made by a witness." ... "The Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees," reports the *Los Angeles Times* (August 3, 1981), "has privately advised the Reagan administration that the United States may be violating international law — and endangering thousands of lives — by deporting displaced Salvadorans to their war-torn homeland." The U.S. has been deporting 1000 Salvadorans a month on the grounds that they are merely "economic refugees." ... The U.S. ambassador to El Salvador recently said that guerrillas killed some 1300 government soldiers between February and August of this year. The army had reported fewer than 150 dead in the same period; nevertheless, Ambassador Dean R. Hinton claimed that his figures came from the army high command.... On August 28, France and Mexico both officially recognized the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Movement, the guerrilla organization seeking to overthrow the government of El Salvador, and urged the ruling junta to negotiate with it and its political allies.... On August 26, the State Department announced that the U.S. is sending four more UH-1H helicopters to El Salvador. Department spokesman Dean Fischer also said that guerrilla activity has increased.

Budget director David Stockman lost an important test of strength to Energy secretary James Edwards when Reagan approved loan guarantees totalling $3.12 billion for two synthetic fuels projects, early in August. (By way of comparison, the infamous Chrylser guarantee was for only (!) $1.5 billion.) In related news, Edward Cox, better known as Richard Nixon's son-in-law, started work in late June in the general counsel's office at the government's $20 billion Synthetic Fuels Corporation, thus creating an aesthetic, as well as an economic, vindication of laissez faire.

"A government investigation has concluded that the mysterious death last month of a Taiwanese professor who fell from a fifth-story window was an accident. The Control Yuan, an investigatory unit that oversees all Taiwanese government operations, suggested in a report released Friday night that Chen Wencheng fell from the fifth story of the Taiwan National University library on July 3 because he was exhausted after questioning by police about his alleged anti-government activities." *San Francisco Chronicle,* August 3, 1981) "The report said that Taiwan's security police should improve their investigative methods, but did not elaborate." ❑

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EDITORIALS

A farewell to our readers

THE CLOSING OF ANY journal of opinion must occasion at least a bit of sadness. Magazines are, after all, where so many of the important intellectual battles of the day are fought, day in and day out, to supplement the superficial yet often pithy commentary coming from our newspapers and airwaves alike. Journals of opinion, like this one, are where views are frankly *stated,* not slid by careless readers in the hope that they will not really notice what is going on. In the pages of the so-called "little" magazines the implicit biases of other sources of news and opinions are transformed into the conscious defense of *convictions,* instead.

And, like conservative periodicals such as *National Review* or *Human Events,* liberal ones such as *The Nation* and *The New Republic,* and socialist journals such as *In These Times* or *The Progressive, The Libertarian Review* was founded in allegiance to certain convictions, which have remained steady throughout its seven years, more or less, of publication.

I say "more or less" because *LR* emerged gradually, through several incarnations over the years, out of the book review newsletter *Books for Libertarians,* founded in 1972 by Robert D. Kephart. Kephart had bought out the *SIL Services Bulletin,* published by the Society for Individual Liberty, in 1972, with the aim of transforming it gradually into a libertarian version of the *New York Review of Books.* Test mailings enabled Kephart to project that such a project was not feasible, and so, for a time, he made do with *BFL.* In October 1974, Kephart changed its name to *Libertarian Review,* keeping basically the same format, and not until March-April 1976 did the first issue of a tabloid format see publication, edited by Karl T. Pflock.

In that fledgling issue of the new tabloid *LR,* Bob Kephart stated that "In publishing *LR,* it is our intention to promote the extension of libertarian ideas, both in academic and nonacademic quarters. To help develop new writers and scholars by providing a market for their work. To stand aside from current political fads, intellectual chicanery of all sorts, and never to lose sight of our final, overarching objective: individual liberty in our time."

But there was an ominous note, too, as Kephart announced that "the quest for this goal has often been a lonely and costly one for the editors and publishers of this little journal. Expenses have steadily exceeded income since the very first issue." That, unfortunately, was to remain the case for the rest of *LR*'s existence. Kephart was forced to sell *Libertarian Review* by the end of 1976; new owners took control, I was appointed editor, and the first issue of yet another format was published in July 1977, an unassuming 48-page magazine format, published by Charles Hamilton of Free Life Books.

My "Credo" editorial in that issue stated anew the purpose of the journal:

Libertarian Review is a journal of opinion. Like any such journal, *LR* has a point of view. But where *LR* differs from other journals lies in *what* that point of view consists of, what values it finds important to champion and uphold. Ours is a deep and abiding commitment to individual liberty and to the growing libertarian movement which seeks to make such liberty a reality in our time. Such commitment is particularly important today, when all opposing political forces have made their decisions in favor of growing state power, differing only about details.

LR opposes statism, whether of the Left or of the Right. *LR* supports individual liberty across the board, on matters of economic freedom *and* civil liberties, on issues of foreign *and* domestic policy, not caring whether we are perceived as "Left" on some issues, or "Right" on others. For the plain truth is that libertarians are neither Left nor Right, but a new political movement with roots in a rich ancient tradition of opposition to tyranny and state power.... We believe that in the modern world, there is simply no excuse for the ways in which governments habitually treat human beings. Holding firmly to the principle that liberty is the highest *political* end, there is today scarcely a political policy or trend to which we would not object.

For the twentieth century has been and continues to be the century of the State, a century where State coercion and violence of every form have become disgustingly commonplace. Every conceivable form of statism has been tried during this century: Fascism, Communism, Social Democracy, the Corporate State, Feudalism, and naked military dictatorships. None of them has in the long run brought anything other than human misery and degradation to the world. None of them has been able to exist for a minute without the most flagrant violations of human rights....

Our doctrine of libertarianism begins with the principle of inviolable individualism, with the view that all human beings are the sole legitimate owners of their own lives, free to do whatever they wish, so long as they do not use violence, aggression or fraud against the person or justly held property of others. We believe that a basic humanism demands that we champion and defend a social system which fully respects the natural individuality and diversity of human beings, a society based on the twin axioms of self-ownership and non-aggression, a society wherein all social relationships are voluntary and uncoerced, where no one may force anyone else to obey him. Every human life should be regarded as an end in itself, never merely as a means. The only way to implement these principles is through a structure of voluntary social relations, resting on consent and agreement, reason and persuasion, where no one is subjugated to the will of another.

Thus, in objecting to the politics of our age, *LR* proposes to offer an alternative which is both consistent and non-dogmatic.

That has been our doctrine; much of the intervening four and a half years has consisted of viewing the world through that perspective. The Left has painted us as "rightists," while the Right has painted us as "leftists." But the truth has always been that we are *libertarians;* that is why the word has always remained, proudly, in our title.

In our most recent incarnation, we came into the world in the midst of the reign of Jimmy Carter, and appropriately enough devoted our cover article in that issue to "Carter's Energy Fascism: Prescription for Power"; we now leave the world in the midst of the reign of Ronald Reagan and, again, our cover is devoted to a critique of the Reagan administration. We began by defending the free market against the domination of the Carter administration, by defending gay rights and feminism, and announcing our support for a noninterventionist foreign

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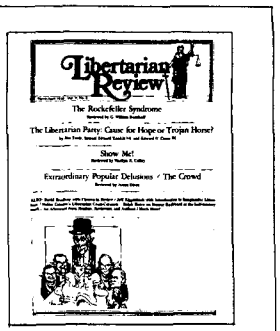
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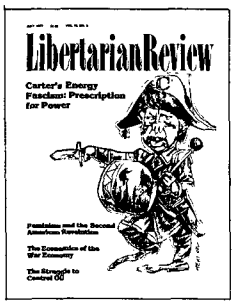

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policy that neither Republicans nor Democrats cared to entertain. We leave by defending the free market against the domination and chicanery of the Reaganites, again supporting freedom and tolerance for those with different lifestyles, and criticizing the interventionist foreign policy which today seems to threaten world peace and human survival on this planet more than at any time since the administration of John F. Kennedy.

If we have had any one consistent mission, it has been to oppose the mythology of Left and Right, of Liberalism and Conservatism, twin branches of the political establishment which have found the maintenance of intellectual package deals so very convenient in blocking the consideration of political alternatives. Today, we face the alleged choice between a triumphant conservatism in power, which offers insignificant cuts in domestic spending and cosmetic deregulation, combined with an enforced social conservatism and increasingly belligerent foreign policy on the one hand, and a cosmetically resurrected libalism, defeated and decaying, on the other. To us, this has always seemed like no choice at all, and we have sought to define a different political vision, combined with a more fundamental, and hence more radical, critique of the *status quo*.

With this issue, *The Libertarian Review* ceases its defiant march; the libertarian movement, however, does not. To our contributors and readers, we offer a fond farewell, and to *Inquiry,* which picks up where we left off, the best of luck in combating the inhumanity and foibles of the age, for many prosperous years to come.

—Roy A. Childs, Jr.

Things to come

MANY READERS OF *THE Libertarian Review* are characterized by their intense personal interest in the magazine. They haven't hesitated to express forcefully their pleasure or displeasure at items which have appeared. And this level of personal interest is not surprising: for many readers, *LR* has been a regular, continuing connection with the libertarian movement since the early 1970s. For them, the discontinuation of *LR* means more than, say, General Mills deciding to discontinue a line of breakfast cereal, and if they somehow feel that "their" magazine is being taken from them, their feeling is understandable. Out of respect and appreciation for these readers, then, it's appropriate not only to give the facts about *LR*'s discontinuation, but also to try to explain the reasons for it, and to indicate what *LR* readers can hope to expect from its successor publication, *Inquiry* magazine.

First, the facts. *LR* will cease publication after this issue, and its parent entity, the Libertarian Review Foundation, will become the publisher of *Inquiry.* Current *LR* subscribers will receive *Inquiry,* which is published 20 times a year, for the number of months remaining on their subscriptions. Those who now subscribe to both publications will have their *Inquiry* subscription extended by the number of months remaining on their *LR* subscriptions. The *Inquiry* staff is relocating from San Francisco to the present *LR* offices at 1320 G Street, Southeast, Washington, D.C. *LR*'s newsletter, *Update,* will continue publication on its ten-times-per-year schedule, and will soon move to an expanded format.

Why is all of this happening? For many reasons, a consolidation between two of the major magazines of the broadly-defined libertarian movement has been inevitable. A movement, by definition, can't be static; it must always be in a process of evolving — or devolving — in one direction or another. Many political movements, of course, have evolved to a certain point of size and influence, and then, quickly, have devolved back to a state of insignificance. The libertarian movement hasn't, and clearly one of the reasons for this has been its willingness to continue seeking to broaden its constituency — to address issues which are of concern to non-libertarians, and to address them in such a way that non-libertarians in search of new ideas and workable solutions can understand that the libertarian approach to these issues is a sensible and morally correct part of a greater framework of ideas which, when implemented, will result in a better society. In ten years, *LR*, the only explicitly libertarian magazine, has evolved from being an organ of internal communication—that is, a vehicle for libertarians to communicate among themselves—to a medium of *outreach,* of applying libertarian principles and ideas to the world's problems not only for, hopefully, the enlightenment of libertarians but also for the expansion of the libertarian constituency.

Four years ago, in its premiere issue, *Inquiry,* which has not been explicitly libertarian in its editorial policies, explained its role this way: "In a sense, every serious magazine article is an inquiry. It consists of a question, often implied, and an answer (or a series of questions and answers)—and, quite simply, we believe that most of the journalism appearing today asks the wrong questions. Wrong questions don't get wrong answers; they get irrelevant answers.... In a political world increasingly dominated by state socialism and state capitalism, we find no common ground with either. In fact, we believe that the most serious ailments of modern society—war, imperialism, centralization, and social control — are a direct result of these political systems."

Like *LR*, *Inquiry,* too, has been evolving, to the point that the two hold considerable common ground. To make a long story short, *LR* and *Inquiry* have gotten together to combine their not unlimited resources in pursuit of their shared goal.

What can *LR*'s readers expect from *Inquiry* in the future? In January of this year, *Inquiry* reaffirmed and clarified its editorial position in the following way: "We believe in the supremacy of the individual. We believe each peaceful person ought to be free to live the way he or she chooses, without the advice or interference of the biggest coercive monopoly of all—the government. We believe that individuals make better decisions about their own lives than do government bureaucrats; that markets allocate resources more efficiently than do government planners; that citizens have a right to protection from tax collectors as well as from robbers, from the prying eyes of intelligence agencies as well as from burglars, from conscriptors as well as from slaveholders. We believe in a notion that is as radical today as it was 200 years ago—that each one of us has unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

These principles and these ideas have been the animating spirit of *The Libertarian Review* throughout its—we think — successful, pathbreaking years as a publication of and for the libertarian movement, and they will continue to guide those who will be responsible for its successor. So it is with deep thanks and appreciation to the *LR* staff, those who will remain and those who are moving on to other endeavors; to our authors, many of whom will continue to appear in the pages of *Inquiry;* and to our readers, that we look forward to the next stage of our effort.

—CH

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THE NEOCONSERVATIVE IN THE WHITE HOUSE

On September 7, President Reagan presented a symbolic $85 million check to New York City's Mayor Koch for highway construction.

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To Ronald Reagan, "free enterprise" is *packaging*, a tissue of rhetoric wrapped around whatever happens to be the *status quo*.

MILTON MUELLER

Ronald Reagan has been President for nearly a year. In that time his initiatives have kicked up a storm of controversy and commentary. Now that the dust is beginning to settle, the nation has a chance to reflect on what the Reagan presidency is all about.

The media obviously don't know—or at least, they do not know what words to use to describe it. Is the Reagan economic program "radical" or even "revolutionary," as a major newsweekly described it? Or is Reagan an "ultra-conservative," even "the most conservative President within recent memory," as the *same* magazine opined in the same article?

One thing the Reagan presidency may teach us—one of the few positive things—is how meaningless the categories we use to describe politics can be. The meaning of words like "liberal" and "conservative" evolve over time. As political attitudes change and constituencies align and realign, the words use may stay the same, but their *meaning* can careen across the political landscape.

Winning Words

Ronald Reagan's election came after he had been twenty years on the stump trumpeting the virtues of "free enterprise." Given his recent support for import quotas, trucking regulation, tobacco price supports, and other government intervention in the economy, it's easy to become confused by his use of the term. Easy, that is, until it is understood that to Ronald Reagan, "free enterprise" is not a system of political economy, a body of economic theory, or a political philosophy. It is *packaging;* a tissue of rhetoric wrapped around whatever happens to be the *status quo*.

Reagan's past sheds considerable light on the nature of his commitment to "free enterprise." He got his start in politics delivering political pep talks in the service of a subsidized corporation, General Electric. Before then, Reagan is said to have had few well-defined beliefs. Bill Boyarsky's book *Ronald Reagan: His Life and Rise to the Presidency* notes that

> Even when he was forty-five, he apparently had not arrived at a clearly defined political philosophy. At that age he began making speeches for General Electric, and the company's president, Ralph Cordiner, became concerned over his difficulties in answering audience's questions. "I told him," Cordiner recalled, "'You'd better get yourself a philosophy, something you can stand for and something you think this country stands for.' I think this is when he really started to change."

This was in 1956. Reagan got himself a philosophy—and what could be more natural than his selection of the traditionally American doctrine of limited government, individual rights, and free enterprise, the philosophy of the American revolution? Reagan was and is no revolutionary, of course; if anything, his philosophy was chosen for its innocuous conservatism at a time when radicalism of any sort was out of favor.

My purpose in discussing the origins of Reagan's ideology is not to reinforce the bitter, left-liberal stereotype of him as a mediagenic charlatan whose deepest thoughts fit on three-by-five note cards. Reagan is a masterful politician and a brilliant public speaker. Those who denigrate him for being a "former actor" understand neither politics nor acting. But I do think that we should be attuned to the delicious symbolism here: Reagan found his ideology and began his political career at General Electric, and General Electric is synonymous with millions in *government contracts*. GE was one of the original parties to the post-World War II alliance between big business and big government which came to be called the "military-industrial complex." This military-industrial complex is both a prime cause and a consequence of the "big government" Reagan says he deplores; among other things, it is responsible for the virtual nationalization of higher education, much of the federal government's role in energy research and development, and about one third of the government's spending.

Our President, then, worked for a company that spends thousands of dollars disseminating the *ideology* of a free market, and at the same time accepts and lobbies for millions in government contracts. Note the arithmetic: thousands spent, millions taken in.

During an appearance on Milton Friedman's television series "Free to Choose," socialist Michael Harrington contended that the free market defended so eloquently by Mr. Friedman was a fantasy world, as contemporary society is shot through with systemic government intervention. Harrington contended that Friedman's use of free market ideology was little more than a *legitimizing* device to protect the interventionist *status quo* from the kind of intervention Mr. Harrington would like to do. For once, libertarians can enthusiastically agree with Mr. Harrington and disagree with Mr. Friedman. The corporate state, swaddled in the red, white and blue bunting of "free enterprise," is safe from attack—even when it plainly *isn't* free enterprise or anything remotely like it. "Legitimization" neatly describes what Republicans do: they give us the packaging of a free society, not the real thing. Republicans don't give us "free-

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dom to choose," they give us the title, the bestseller, and the television series—on *public* television, yet. They market the *rhetoric* of individual freedom, on which they have numerous patents and copyrights.

The trek to neoconservatism

If the free enterprise of Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party is mostly packaging, then what does the package hold? The answer, in 1981, is the program of *neoconservatism*, which has become the touchstone of a new consensus in American politics, Only by examining the nature of this new consensus—what it is, who supports it, and where it came from—can we place the Reagan administration in perspective and evaluate where it is leading us.

The term *neoconservatism* embraces an intellectual movement with its own more or less explicitly formulated worldview. It also denotes the social and political consensus behind the realignment of the American electorate last year, a realignment which elected Reagan and gave the Republican Party control of the U.S. Senate for the first time since 1952. The attachment of the prefix *neo* to the word *conservative* suggests that people have *become* conservative, that they *learned* to be more "conservative" than they used to be. Ronald Reagan himself is the most obvious example. President Reagan started out life as a liberal Democrat. His political beliefs, to the extent that he formulated them, did not change all that much during his drift from liberal Democrat to conservative Republican. What changed most was the political program denoted by the words *Democrat* and *Republican*.

In this respect Reagan is like many other people of his generation, the New Deal generation. In the 1930s the New Deal "saved them from the Depression," or so it claimed; in the 1940s they fought a world war for it; in the 1950s they purged it of communists; and in the 1960s they defended the New Deal against their own children. This generation once predominantly called itself "Democrat," but now to an increasing degree is beginning to vote Republican.

Reagan has been a neoconservative for some time. But before neoconservatism could even be named it had to acquire its very own intellectuals.

Neoconservatism is the term the 1970s attached to an intellectual movement whose central figures are clustered around *Commentary* magazine. This movement is led by people such as Norman Podhoretz, editor of *Commentary;* social scientists Nathan Glazer and Daniel Bell; American Enterprise Institute scholar Irving Kristol, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and State Department official Jeanne Kirkpatrick. Once, all were liberal Democrats. Podhoretz was opposed to the Vietnam war in the mid-sixties. Moynihan helped draft Johnson's War on Poverty legislation. Glazer and Bell were quite at home among the social engineers of the New Frontier and the Johnson administration. They were not like those crude and bumptious Westerners who supported Barry Goldwater; they were "liberals."

Today, they are not "liberals." They are "neoconservatives." And those of them who are not already in the Republican Party are flirting with it. Their retreat to neoconservatism was prompted by three factors: the antiwar movement, the civil rights movement, and, retrospectively, the Great Society. In other words, they are now *against* everything that the word *liberal* came to stand for during the sixties and seventies. They've decided that they like the "liberalism" of FDR and JFK better than the "liberalism" of George McGovern, Martin Luther King, and student protesters.

Americans are insufficiently aware of the profound changes undergone by the word *liberal* in recent American history. A liberal Democrat in 1950 or even 1960 was an entirely different animal from a liberal Democrat of 1972. By 1972, the movement against the Vietnam War had transformed the national Democratic Party into an antiwar party. The scope of the change wrought by this young, leaderless, and inexperienced movement in such a short time is testimony to the depth and breadth of the support it enjoyed. Never before had one of the two major parties been brought around so rapidly to so radical a position as the national Democratic Party was from 1968 to 1972. Until 1968, the Deomocratic Party was the war party, the party of internationalism and global military intervention. When John Kennedy ran against Richard Nixon in 1960, Kennedy was the *hardliner* on defense. Democrat Lyndon Johnson, of course, was the man who escalated the war in Vietnam to the murderous levels we all remember but prefer not to discuss—at least in Washington. He did this with the full support of a Democratic Congress. Humphrey, Nixon's opponent in 1968, was a longtime supporter of our overseas commitments. Within the span of a few years, a political party which was once the architect of a global military empire and was actively prosecuting the Vietnam War was transformed into an organ of the movement to end that war.

At the same time, the economic and social views of the New Class were also carried into the Democratic Party. The New Class consisted of professional intellectuals in the government's academic-bureaucratic complex—the domestic counterpart of the military-industrial complex. (We don't hear as much about this complex and the piles of money it receives as we do about the other one, because the people who generally tell us about such things are all *in* it.) The New Class supported an egalitarian redistributionism that went far beyond the New Frontier and Great Society schemes of previous Democrats. It wanted all of society to be "democratized," planned, and equal.

Taking the logic of busing for racial balance a step beyond the liberal Democrats of the fifties and sixties, the New Class came out for quotas and "affirmative action." The influence of the youth and civil rights movements also made the Democrats (or rather, *some* of them) more socially liberal than ever before, more likely to defend the right to free speech, the right to protest government policies, sometimes even the right to smoke a joint. Such was the new "liberalism" of the Democratic Party. The nomination of George McGovern as the Party's 1972 presidential candidate was its culmination—a chance to offer its program as a whole to the American people.

McGovernism not only lost the election by a landslide, it also pushed the neoconservative intellectuals out of the Party and toward Reaganism.

Social issues and strategy

Neoconservative intellectuals were not the only group driven from the Democratic Party by McGovernism. In 1968, about the same time that the "liberalism" of the Democratic Party began to shift to the left, the Republicans were eyeing hungrily the 13 million votes attracted by George Wallace. Wallace, like the vast majority of Southerners, was a Democrat. But his movement was fueled by a visceral disgust for the counterculture, liberal intellectuals, and the civil rights movement—precisely the groups seizing control of the Democratic Party at the time. Republican

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strategists Paul Weyrich and Kevin Phillips began to speak of the possibility of an alliance between the GOP's economically conservative, upper-middle class base and the social conservatives tapped by Wallace.

No Democratic presidential candidate has ever reached the Oval Office without winning the electoral votes of the South. This fact formed the point of departure for Nixon's "southern strategy" in 1972. Nixon's social conservatism—which at the time meant "law and order," drug busts, crackdowns on dissent, and Billy Graham — wooed the South away from the Democrats. Native son Carter won it back in 1976 with born-again Christianity. But Reagan reconstructed the Nixon coalition in the 1980 election, cutting deeply into Carter's hold on the South. Reagan went on to clinch this alliance during the ensuing battle of the budget. Twenty-nine conservative Democrats, mostly from the South and West, allied themselves with Reagan during the budget and tax cut battles. With their support, Reagan had a working majority in both Houses of Congress.

By now the historical context of the Reagan presidency should be clear. Under the leadership of Reagan, neoconservatism holds together a coalition that draws from the business community, much of middle America, a respectable portion of blue collar and union workers, the antiabortion, anti-ERA, antihomosexual, and antidrug social conservatives, and the entire military half of the federal bureaucracy. This consensus also has its own court intellectuals — first-rate fully certified academics who give the programs and worldview of neoconservatism the explicit formulation they need to survive and spread.

What is the neoconservative program? Domestically, it stands for managed economic growth within the context of a fiscally conservative, efficiently administered welfare state. The government is to loosen up its deathgrip on the economy a bit, but should still, as Irving Kristol, Jack Kemp, and Reagan himself have indicated, maintain a "safety net" of social welfare programs. Internationally, the neoconservatives stand for massive rearmament and a reassertion of American power, although this is both the most dangerous and the least popular element of their program. Social con-

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American Enterprise Institute scholar Irving Kristol (right) and social scientists Daniel Bell (top left) and Nathan Glazer, three men who are, with Norman Podhoretz and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, central figures in the neoconservative movement.

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servatism, a collective recoil from the "excesses" of the sixties, rounds out the consensus. James Q. Wilson, a professor of government at Harvard who sees "Reaganism" as the focal point of a broadbased social movement, summed up their social views when he wrote:

> Reaganism stands in opposition to those who believe in the unrestrained right of personal self-expression and the need for government to rationalize all other aspects of human affairs by rule and procedure. Reaganism opposes those who would legalize marijuana, abortions, and pornography and tolerate or encourage draft resistance all in the name of personal freedom...

Ominously, the unifying characteristic of the Reagan consensus is that it was produced in reaction to the breakdown of *authority* which took place during the sixties. Reaganism is a movement to reestablish the authority of the U.S. government — at home and in the rest of the world.

A program to moderate disaster

The neoconservative program as implemented in the first 200 days of the Reagan presidency is not "revolutionary," "radical," or even a marked shift to the right. It is a shift to the *center,* to the middle ground between two opposing extremes. Far from being a wholesale assault on the role of government, neoconservatism is simply an older, grumpier, slightly more reactionary version of the Roosevelt coalition.

The more we look at the *facts* about Reagan, the more centrist he appears — provided we screen out his rhetoric and are careful to maintain a sense of historical perspective.

Reagan has not cut the size of the federal government, he has slowed, and possibly stopped, its *rate of increase.* Reagan is attempting to hold federal spending increases to about 7 percent a year, down from an average annual rate of 12 percent from 1976-81. If we guess at the future rate of inflation, we can arrive at an estimate that the Reagan cuts will leave federal spending 1 percent lower in real dollars than the FY 1981 budget. More particularly, Reagan has stopped the snowballing growth of only a *portion* of the federal government: the social welfare bureaucracy. The rate of growth is accelerating far beyond the pace of inflation in another area—the military. Although the media have all but allowed Reagan to define the Pentagon out of the U.S. budget, it *is* part of the government and it is growing at record levels.

Reagan's budget "cuts," then, are actually a massive *transfer* of wealth from the welfare to the warfare arm of the state. The administration proposed cuts of $48 million in social programs and increases of $51 billion in military spending. If Reagan has his way, military spending will continue to rise for five more years, until annual outlays reach $343 billion in 1986. Even with the domestic cuts, the total budget will swell from $695 billion in FY 1982 to $912 billion in FY 1986, as the military's share rises from 27 percent to 38 percent.

Reagan's distinct shift of priorities is not a departure from the norm of American history but a return to it. In essence, Reagan is simply returning the American system to the same kind of ratio between guns and butter that existed before the Great Society. In fact, the federal budget figures from 1960-1963 show that even after the cuts, Reagan will be devoting a greater portion of the federal budget to social spending than did the Kennedy administration. In 1961, the total federal budget was $97.8 billion. Of that, $46.6 billion, or roughly 48 percent, was devoted to defense. About $29 billion, or 29.8 percent, was devoted to social spending. These percentages remained stable from 1961-1963.

By way of contrast, defense expenditures make up 27.2 percent of Reagan's FY 1982 budget. Reagan's massive military spending spree will up that to 37.6 percent by 1986. Social welfare spending, on the other hand, will easily surpass 52 percent of the budget in FY 1982.

Turning from budget cuts to tax cuts, the same picture of moderation prevails. The Reagan cuts in personal income taxes through 1984 will barely offset *increases* in taxes caused by inflation-driven "bracket creep" and the Social Security system. Reagan has told us explicitly that his tax-cutting plans are modeled after John Kennedy's — not Howard Jarvis's — and he is correct.

If Reagan's attempt to move the American system back to the center occasioned great howls of pain and expressions of astonishment, it only serves to emphasize just how far *off* center the system had been moved by the trauma of the sixties. That era challenged the hegemony of the American state to a degree unprecedented in this century. Two Presidents in a row, Johnson and Nixon, were forced to resign. Both their successors, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, became unloved and unlamented one-termers. Organizations like the Trilateral Commission were beginning to complain about the "ungovernability" of Western democracies. Jimmy Carter decried our "national malaise" on network television. Books began to appear about the "Twilight of the Presidency" and the "Deadlock of Democracy."

The battle between butter and guns

Ever since FDR, the U.S. government has functioned most effectively as a *coalition* between the welfare state and the warfare state. Roosevelt, who found world war to be the ultimate in public works, was the first to forge this coalition. However, in peacetime, welfare expenditures and warfare expenditures satisfy completely different constituencies. In the sixties, the welfare state declared war on the warfare state. The intellectuals, students, and poverty activists of the New Class rejected the Vietnam War and the foreign policy of which it was an instrument. The classic balance struck by Roosevelt broke down as the welfare state began to expand almost without restraint. This in turn led to the final breakdown of Roosevelt's liberal Democratic coalition. With Nixon's 1972 landslide, the Republicans began to inherit certain elements of this coalition. With Reagan's 1980 mandate, the Republicans have consolidated their hold on Nixon's 1972 majority. Reagan is using this mandate to steer the system back to the center, back to the welfare-warfare state coalition.

Reagan's budget cuts have been hailed and condemned, but they have never been placed in context. One newspaper report called the cuts a "bold attack on the underpinnings of liberal government." Another reported that the President is "reversing 40 years of social legislation" while still another said that the President was "eliminating" social programs that have been "at the foundation of government for fifty years."

These assertions are simply wrong. The social programs Reagan is cutting have emphatically *not* been "at the foundation of government for fifty years." The programs cut by Reagan are either of Great Society vintage or else they arrived even later, during the Nixon, Ford, or Carter administrations. Not one of them has been around for fifty years. One of Reagan's biggest cuts was the CETA program — a Nixon-Ford program scarcely seven years old. Government energy expenditures have also felt the knife (with the exception of nuclear power). Most of these expenditures began

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with the Carter administration. All of the cuts in social security benefits were made in programs added much later to the fundamental New Deal-era legislation. The entitlement programs cut by the administration—Medicare, food stamps, and unemployment—are all post-New Deal. Although my information is not complete, as far as I can tell the oldest social welfare program cut by Reagan is the food stamp program, which began in 1961.

Reagan is not out to repeal the New Deal, only the Great Society. And this leads to the most convincing evidence yet of Reagan's credentials as a centrist: practically everybody, including most of today's Democrats, believes that the Great Society was a failure, or at least that it got out of hand. It is common knowledge that the inflation we suffer today was fueled by Great Society-era expenditures. Does anybody really believe that the poor are better off for it, or that such expenditures provide a lasting solution to their problems?

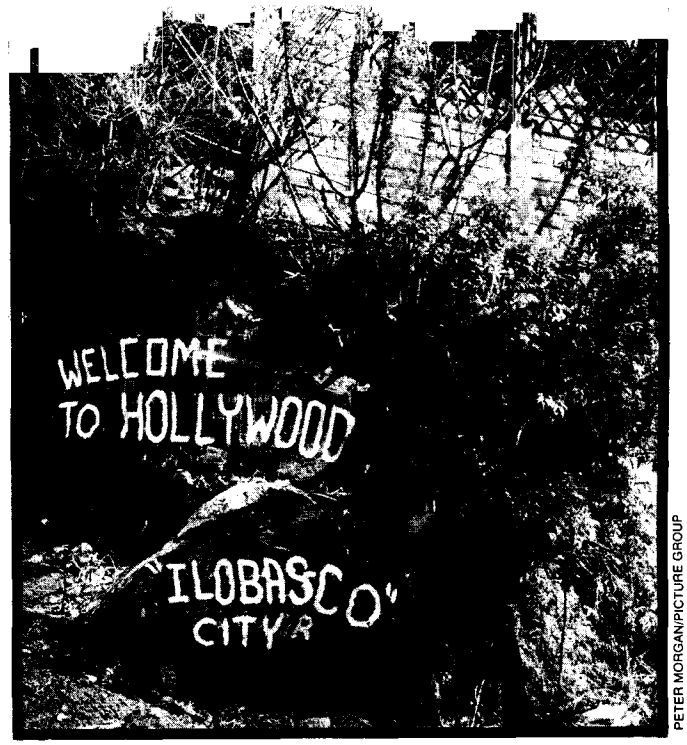
Double-digit inflation, rising unemployment, and declining productivity do not lend themselves to the old liberal Democratic solutions. No one, not even Senator Kennedy, is seriously proposing that the U.S. embark on another round of social spending and wealth redistribution. On the contrary: the Democratic Party's alternative to the Reagan budget, drafted by House Ways and Means Committee Chair Dan Rostenkowski, a Chicago Democrat, accepted 85 percent of Reagan's cuts.

Examining the Reagan and Carter budget proposals for FY 1982 provides an objective frame of reference within which we can compare the two parties' priorities. The comparison reveals that the neoconservative consensus is bipartisan. It's all a matter of degree. Both budget proposals embody the same shift in priorities: spend more for defense and attempt to stem the rate of government growth. Carter's budget called for spending $8.2 billion less than what would have been spent if the program and policies in effect at the beginning of 1981 continued unchanged. Carter, not Reagan, began the defense buildup; his 1982 figure of $184.4 billion for the Pentagon was only 2 percent less than Reagan's mammoth increase of $188.8 billion.

A new role for libertarianism

Reaganism is steeped so thoroughly in the rhetoric of liberty and the free market that he has momentarily eclipsed the libertarian movement. Commentators on both the left and the right often mistake libertarianism for a purist, politically naive version of Reagan's own philosophy. In his *Village Voice* interview with 1980 Libertarian Party presidential candidate Ed Clark, Alexander Cockburn summed up the prevailing stereotype when he concluded that "Ed Clark is the candidate for your thoughtful businessman; his is perhaps the party to clear the minds and stiffen the spines of the Reaganites — who seem, after the libertarians, a mushy lot indeed." Once we understand the nature of the political coalition that brought the GOP to power, it is easy to see just how wide a gulf separates the libertarian movement from the neoconservatives. Reaganites are not mushy libertarians and libertarians are not hard-core Reaganites. Neoconservatism is a mandate to reconsolidate and retrench state power; it is the New Deal encrusted with a patina of folksy conservative philosophy. Libertarianism, on the other hand, is animated by a radical critique of the justice and efficacy of state power—*all* state power, whether it be wielded by commissars or businessmen.

It is easy to cite examples of anti-libertarian positions taken by Reagan: he has supported import quotas and



PETER MORGAN/PICTURE GROUP

Public reaction to Reagan's proposed intervention in El Salvador ran 25 to 1 against, *and as this graffiti from that country suggests, the natives felt the same way.*

initiated a program of immigration control; he has subsidized nuclear power and opposed trucking deregulation. It is even easier to find unlibertarian stands on noneconomic issues: Reagan has not abolished draft registration, even though it was established by Executive Order and hence could be eliminated by him with a stroke of a pen. He opposes marijuana legalization and is initiating a new round of political spying.

If the neoconservative coalition continues to control the GOP, it is possible that the politics of the late 1980s and 1990s could develop into a contest between the neoconservatism of the GOP (and the Democrats) and the radical liberalism of the Libertarian Party or some other institution.

Libertarianism the only radical alternative to Reaganism? This assertion may startle people both within and without the movement. But consider the essential elements of the neoconservative program: renewed militarism, social conservatism, and economic retrenchment. In each area, the neoconservatives are taking positions in diametric opposition to the libertarian positions. And in each case, other political groupings which might arise to challenge neoconservatism are paralyzed by their own inconsistencies.

Taken foreign policy first. Today's "liberal" Democrats, if there are any left in office, have given up the fight for nonintervention, or even for *restraints* on intervention and militarism. This should not surprise us because, as the history of the Democratic Party shows, they never had any principled objection to intervention, nor any systematic critique of it, to begin with. If they opposed the Vietnam War (not many did) it was because it appeared to be a proper thing to do at the time. The radical left's attacks on U.S. imperialism are ineffective as well, for two reasons. First, its members are associated with domestic policies most Americans reject (it's as hard to get excited about shifting money from the Pentagon to welfare as vice-versa). Second, their foreign policy views are regarded with great suspicion because, as leftists, they are associated in the public mind either with the Soviet Union or the communist revolutionaries in the Third World, or both.

Libertarian opposition to foreign intervention is the most

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consistent and well-substantiated of any political grouping. Libertarians are unlikely to be accused of sympathy for a communist victory, either here or abroad; indeed, a central feature of the libertarian analysis of foreign policy is that U.S. intervention has driven potentially democratic revolutionaries into the arms of the communists. The libertarian analysis shows that intervention is *unnecessary* as well as counterproductive. Libertarians have demonstrated the ability to make nonintervention an attractive alternative to average Americans and not just to a radical fringe. And they have backed up their philosophy with action, by working long and hard for the draft resistance movement. In practical political terms, then, libertarians have taken the lead in resisting the neoconservative remilitarization program. How well will Reagan's "libertarian" rhetoric go over when he is forced to prosecute *libertarians* to enforce the draft registration program he knows he must have to carry out his foreign policy goals?

Weak links in the neoconservative chain

The issue of war and intervention is the weakest link in the neoconservative program. The country may be turning its back on the radicalism of the sixties, but the radicals won on one issue: the war in Vietnam. It is true, as the neoconservatives like to point out, that McGovern the anti-war candidate went down to an overwhelming defeat. But they forget to mention that Nixon was generally perceived to be winding down the war. Only a few days before Americans walked to the polls in November of 1972, newspapers carried banner headlines with Kissinger's fraudulent announcement that "peace is at hand." For many, this announcement eliminated the only conceivable reason they might have had for voting for McGovern. When the newly elected Reagan administration tried to generate support for intervention in El Salvador, as calls and letters supporting Reagan's budget cuts came in at a rate of 100-1, the administration was forced to admit that the letters on El Salvador came in 25-1 *against* the interventionist policy. Reagan quickly backed down.

Next to foreign policy, the most unlibertarian element of the neoconservative consensus is its militant social conservatism. Conservative Republicans have become born-again believers in government social intervention, even as they prate of free enterprise. Far from rejecting the tools of social engineering employed for years by their old enemies on the left, the right now is attempting to adapt them to their own purposes. The New Right's "Family Protection Act," for example, uses federal incentives and laws to promote the traditional family structure. Did liberals use federal funding as both a carrot and a stick to enforce racial and sexual "equality"? The conservative response, now that they're in power, is to use the same techniques to oppose abortion, buttress the nuclear family, persecute communists, discourage homosexuality, and encourage religion. Libertarians and libertarians alone are in a position to say: a pox on *both* your houses, left and right, Moral Majority or secular humanist egalitarian bureaucrat. In many ways, left-liberals, who have been using government power to advance their social views for decades, deserve exactly what the New Right is giving them. Only the libertarian movement is in much of a position to provide consistent civil libertarian opposition to the New Right's onslaught. Moreover, libertarians are helped by their awareness of the intrinsic link between a free market economy and personal freedom. It is no accident that the Moral Majority has joined the Nader-ites in opposition to the deregulation of broadcasting. They know that freedom of speech, which they oppose, is completely dependent upon a free market in the electronic media.

Perhaps surprisingly to some, libertarians also have an easier time defining an alternative to Reaganomics than the left seems to have. What, after all, does the left have to offer in the way of an economic program these days? They won't get far pointing back to the good old days of the Great Society. But what *can* they advocate? Socialism? It's a dead issue in America. National planning and full employment? Sorry, but Reagan and the Pentagon are already giving us the only kind of government planning and employment that is politically viable in this country, and that is through the medium of the military-industrial complex. The left simply has no economic program that is not already discredited or easily coopted. The "economic democracy" of Tom Hayden, for example, is hardly distinguishable from the proposals of corporate financier Felix Rohatyn, or from the "reindustrialization" schemes of *Business Week*.

Libertarian theory, in contrast, provides the basis for a thoroughgoing critique of Reaganomics and a practical alternative path to economic growth. Although Reagan is eliminating some forms of government intervention in the economy, these reforms are little more than payoffs to his business constituencies. At the same time, he is strengthening the ties between government and business in enough ways to make the charge of "corporate statism" justified. The subsidy to the Clinch River Breeder Reactor and other forms of encouragement extended to the nuclear power industry means that Americans will be linked to this overly centralized, heavily subsidized form of energy for some time. His support for import quotas and the Chrysler bailout is a major step down the road to a new protectionism.

One form of government intervention into the economy pioneered by the Reagan presidency has almost escaped notice: it is the use of the tax system as an economic planning device, a kind of supply-side Keynesianism. Reagan's juggling of the tax structure to reward some groups and give incentives to others is a form of planning, a form of control—no matter how much he says he's a "free marketeer."

And then there is the problem of inflation. The best policy Reagan can come up with is to balance the budget. But the goal happens to be inconsistent with cutting taxes and increasing military spending, his top priorities.

The need for freedom

A balanced budget, cuts in taxes, and increased military spending—they said it couldn't be done. It couldn't. The federal deficit for FY 1982 already looks, as we go to press, $20 to $37 billion higher than the administration was projecting in July. The 1983 deficit is now projected at $60 billion—$35 billion more than the original projections of the administration. In 1984, the deadline Reagan set for a balanced budget, the deficit is now projected to be up to *$100 billion*. The certainty of large federal deficits caused by Reagan's military spending spree is keeping interest rates astronomically high, as Wall Street anticipates heavy federal borrowing. Until interest rates fall, investment will be stifled. If there is no new investment, there will be no economic recovery. Reagan is beginning to complain publicly about the Federal Reserve and "Wall Street." He has reason to worry. Inflation can destroy his coalition. Busi-

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nesses, consumers, and workers will desert him in droves if he cannot deliver on his promise of economic recovery. Reagan's budget and tax cuts will *not*, by themselves, deliver that recovery, and Reagan knows it. Only stopping double-digit inflation and bringing down interest rates will do that. And that is the one thing Reagan doesn't know how to do.

To libertarians, inflation is an almost inevitable product of the structure of our economy — specifically its monopoly banking and currency system, which is a creaking relic of the Progressive Era, with New Deal additions. Following Nobel Laureate F. A. Hayek, libertarians propose an end to central banking and the denationalization of money as the only long-term solution to inflation. Unlike the Republicans, who seem to be interested only in removing regulations from the path of established businesses, libertarians want to clear the path for new job opportunities and new competition by sweeping away the barriers to entry that government has erected throughout the economy. That is the path to true economic growth. Libertarians call for global free trade, a goal intimately related to our foreign policy goals of nonintervention, disarmament, and demilitarization. These measures, along with the demonopolization of education and radical deregulation of communications, will facilitate the transition from a centralized industrial economy to a decentralized information economy.

Far from being allied with the Reaganites, libertarians may be the only ones around to offer much of an alternative to it. With Reagan, the liberalism of the New Deal has settled into a stagnant, conservative rut. The New Deal—once the benchmark of American liberalism—has become profoundly conservative. The only alternative to such neoconservatism is a revitalized liberalism. But "liberalism" as we know it—the liberalism of the sixties — has been thoroughly repudiated. And it deserved to be.

The only fresh conception of liberalism around is that of the libertarian movement. The American Heritage Dictionary defines *liberal* as "having, expressing or following views or policies that favor the freedom of individuals to act or express themselves in a manner of their own choosing." If this is what liberalism means, then the libertarian movement is and always has been the only true representative of liberalism on the contemporary scene. All of its positions, policies, and actions are chosen to "favor the freedom of individuals to act or express themselves in a manner of their own choosing," whether those choices are economic, cultural, or political. Libertarianism draws heavily from the classical liberal tradition of the Levellers, Adam Smith, and the American revolutionaries. A renaissance of libertarian social thought — based on the twentieth century work of Ludwig von Mises, F.A. Hayek, and Murray Rothbard — seeks to rework the methods and goals of classical liberalism into the complex problems posed by the technological society of today.

If, as predicted here, politics in the next two decades becomes a contest between neoconservatism and radical liberalism or libertarianism, then Ronald Reagan may come to regret his skills as a packager. He might perform his role selling "less government" so well that the people of this country will believe him, and begin to demand *real* freedom —the product that's supposed to be inside the package. The stage will then be set for the emergence of a new American liberalism. ❑

Milton Mueller is an associate editor of *LR*.
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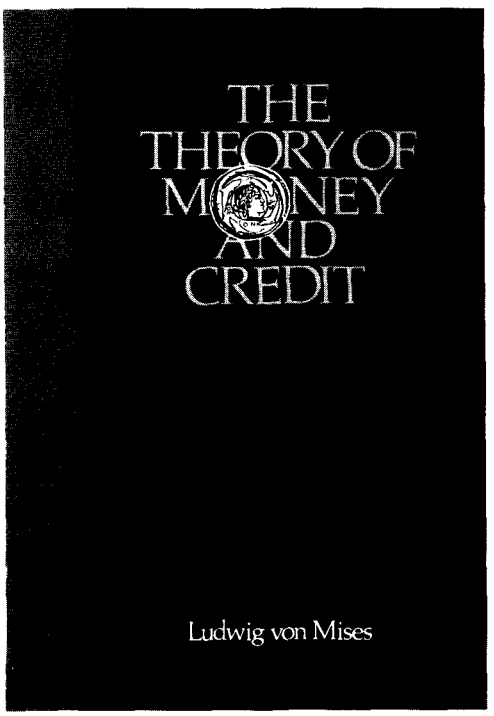

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August, 1981 – A Paris demonstration against U.S. resumption of the neutron bomb program.

At the Brink

The European Nuclear Disarmament Movement

JAY HILGARTNER

"We think that U.S. planners are developing scenarios for fighting a nuclear war with Russia confined to Europe. And it doesn't amuse us. This is where we live."
—Prof. E. P. Thompson

Proponents call it a common battle for survival. Opponents revile it as a display of "pacifist" and "neutralist" sentiments that endangers the existence of the NATO alliance itself. Both are referring to a growing, increasingly influential European movement for nuclear disarmament. It is a largely spontaneous grassroots movement, born of a concern among many Europeans that the United States is rapidly developing plans to sacrifice Europe in a limited nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union. The concern was heightened by President Reagan's decision in August to go ahead with plans for the production of the neutron bomb—a weapon intended for use in a European conflict.

The movement's immediate goal is to stop the installation throughout Western Europe of 572 nuclear-tipped missiles capable of reaching the Soviet Union. Its ultimate goal is, as one activist put it, "a nuclear free Europe from Poland to Portugal."

A myriad of coalitions

The European Nuclear Disarmament Movement (or END, as it is known by the loosely knit umbrella organization headquartered in London) cuts across age and class lines. It draws support from the young and the old; from blue and white collar workers; from retired soldiers, church groups, pacifists, socialists, and environmentalists; from people who want their countries out of NATO and people who support NATO but pale at the thought of a nuclear war in Europe. It is comprised of a myriad of coalitions between groups and individuals throughout the Netherlands, West Germany, Great Britain, Denmark, Scandinavia, and Italy. But whatever the viewpoint of each individual supporter, the disarmament movement's concerns can be summed up in the words of one young protester to CBS News, "The problem is that these new missiles will be able to hit the Soviet Union directly, and this might involve a war in Europe without, for instance, the United States really being involved as a theater of war. But it's us here. We don't want to be the target in a nuclear war between the United States and the USSR."

The Netherlands is spearheading the opposition to deployment of the new missiles and here (as elsewhere in Europe) the church is serving as both leader and forum. The Interchurch Peace Council, an organization sponsored by the major Dutch churches including the highly influential Dutch Reformed Church, is calling for a ban on the deployment of the new missiles and eventually on all nuclear weapons in their country. The Dutch Reformed Church, which claims a quarter of the country's 14 million population, decreed it to be immoral for a nation to possess nuclear weapons and gave formal endorsement to the movement in November 1980. "We no longer believe in a balance of terror approach to disarmament," explains Max van den Berg, chairman of the Dutch Labor Party. "We no longer have the feeling the nuclear umbrella is protecting us." Recent polls disclose that 60 percent of the Dutch people favor removal of nuclear weapons from the Netherlands.

In Great Britain, the old Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has been resurrected from the earlier ban-the-bomb protests and now boasts 17,000 members—up 2,000 from last year. On October 26, 1980, over 70,000 people gathered at Trafalgar Square in London to protest against nuclear weapons. A Marplan poll published April 22, 1981 shows that half of Britain's voters disapprove of the government's decision to allow the United States to station nuclear cruise missiles in their country. Twenty-three percent said they favor nuclear disarmament.

In Bonn, West Germany, the April 1981 meeting of the NATO nuclear war planning group was met by tens of thousands of protesters shouting "NATO go back to Texas" and other anti-American and anti-missile slogans. On June 22, in a decision reminiscent of the recent Mormon Church's resolution against the MX missile system in the United States, West Germany's influential Protestant Evangelical Church—a federation of Lutheran, United, and Reformed churches representing nearly half the country's population—formally expressed its opposition to the missile deployment. Looking back on World War II, Cornelius van Heyl, chairman of the Protestant synod, explained, "We have been strongly influenced by the experience of the Third Reich, by the sense that the church then did not do enough when the

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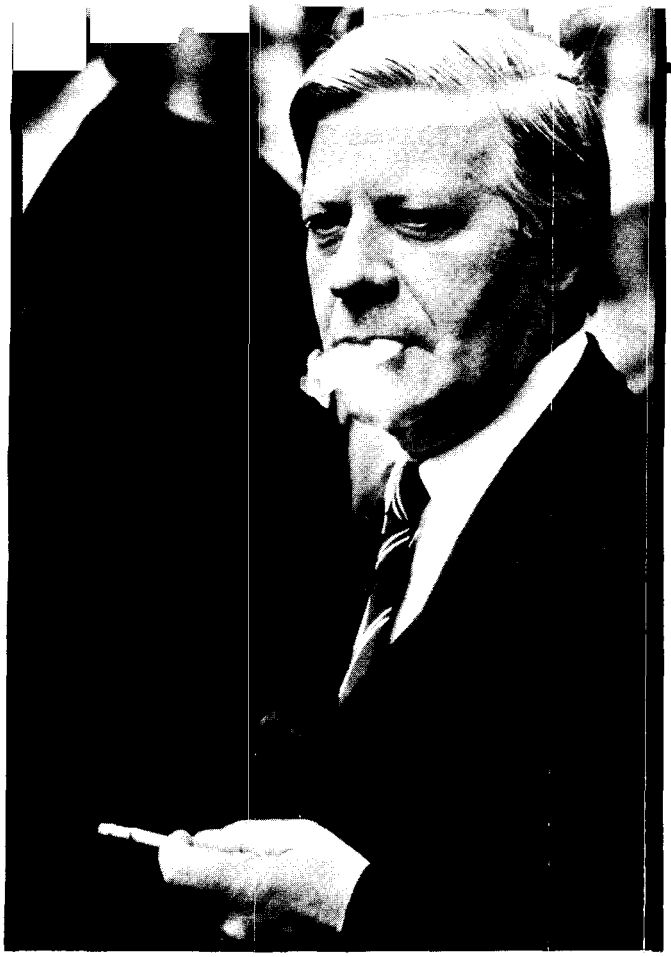

STEPHEN J. SHERMAN/PICTURE GROUP

Helmut Schmidt is just one of the Western European politicians whose careers are threatened by the disarmament movement.

government was developing.... We feel we have a responsibility now when dangerous and inhuman developments appear."

The Protestant Evangelical Church, extremely influential with the ruling Social Democrat Party, has become the latest ally in a movement that threatens, among others, the political career of West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt—a movement that ironically Schmidt himself unwittingly helped to create.

Schmidt's call to arms

It was Helmut Schmidt who, in a speech before the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London on October 28, 1977, first publicly called for the development of long range missiles on West European soil. Schmidt was voicing his and other European heads of state's concern over the new SS-20 intermediate range ballistic missiles recently installed and aimed at European cities and military installations. Suspicious of the extent of America's commitment to its nuclear umbrella over Europe, Schmidt called for a new generation of intermediate range nuclear weapons to counter the Soviet SS-20s.

The Carter administration quickly responded to Schmidt's request by proposing to construct two new missiles for deployment in Europe—the Tomahawk Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) and the Pershing II Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM). Both missiles will be highly accurate, with a range of 1500 miles and 1000 miles respectively, and thus able to strike most targets in the western portion of the Soviet Union.

The so-called High Level Group of defense experts from NATO countries assembled in late 1977 to study Carter's proposal. They decided on 108 Pershing IIs and 464 Tomahawk cruise missiles to be installed in Great Britain, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands by 1983. The new weapons would be entirely owned and controlled by the United States. On December 12, 1979, a NATO conference of ministers in Brussels formally approved the plan.

The Brussels conference brought to the fore the growing debate over the new missiles in particular and Theater Nuclear Forces (TNF) in general. Because of the already intense domestic opposition, the Netherlands government postponed approval of the plan for two years, or until December of 1981. For the same reason, the Belgian government postponed approval for six months. Italy, Great Britain, and West Germany approved the plan, but only when accompanied by assurances that the U.S. would seek arms reduction negotiations with the Soviet Union. (The later position was viewed by many as a move by European governments to make the popular acceptance of the new missiles more palatable to the European electorate.)

Such concession, however, came too late, for by early 1980 European suspicions over U.S. military policy had coalesced into fear. More and more Europeans have begun to regard the United States as equally threatening to their peace and security as—or even more threatening than—the Soviet Union. Ben J. Th. ter Veer, head of the Dutch Interchurch Peace Council and a leader in the disarmament movement, explains,

In the sixties and early years of the seventies, there were widespread expectations the U.S. and the Soviet Union could and would learn gradually to ban their rivalry and competition from the area of armaments. Therefore ... the intense fear for the holocaust remained in the background, became a hidden and latent fear.... Since then we have witnessed the apparent end of the SALT process, the introduction in Europe of the SS-20, the Pershing II, the Tomahawk cruise missile and the neutron bomb .... An unlimited and murderous competition has again come to the forefront. Within the United States, it feeds on a mood which impresses one as a mixture of deep seated fear, frustration and aggression — feelings drawn from within, but with the Soviet Union at their center .... Soviet feelings of insecurity about its imperium are growing and much of the Soviet policy should be understood as compensation for this insecurity, which makes this policy not less a threat to peace. As a result both the superpowers and their respective allies are looked upon by important segments of public opinion in the Netherlands as being unable to guarantee justice, peace, or security in this world.... These are the reasons why the peace movement in the Netherlands and elsewhere is gaining considerable strength.

From "if" to "when"

European fears about U.S. military policy are not unfounded. Because of the devastating nature of nuclear war, American officials more and more have considered theater nuclear force alternatives that would somehow limit a nuclear conflict to the European theater. Indeed the new Pershing and cruise missiles have been advocated (however rationally or irrationally) as a means of threatening the Soviet Union directly without having to risk as a price of that threat destruction wrought on the American homeland by attacking Soviet missiles. "Missiles in Western Europe," notes a Mr. Treverton of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, "would give the American President an intermediate option [stopping short of] putting American cities at risk."

The debate seems to have chillingly moved from "if" to "when" war breaks out in Europe. Former Secretary for

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Defense Harold Brown testified before Congress earlier this year that "the battleground for the *next* [emphasis mine] conventional war will be Europe." "There is a growing feeling that we are moving inexorably toward a nuclear war in Europe," notes retired Rear Admiral Gene R. LaRocque, head of the Washington based Center for Defense Information, and he adds, "It seems unfair that nuclear war will be fought over and in the nations which have nothing to say about whether nuclear weapons are to be used."

NATO forces today are undergoing training for fighting in what is called the "integrated battlefield" where conventional, biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons would be employed in any combination. "I certainly believe that nuclear weapons would serve a useful purpose on the battlefield," said American Brigadier General Niles J. Fulwyler to CBS News. "For instance, the weapons that we have over there [in Europe] could be used to help confront an overwhelming conventional attack... they can be used to rupture tough defenses... and of course one of the principal purposes of deterrent that they serve is to be able to be there to respond to an adversary's use of nuclear weapons." Noting the devastations expected from a "limited" nuclear war in Europe, Gen. Fulwyler added, "One of the realities of the integrated battlefield... is the fact that entire units might very well disappear in the flash of an eye.... One of the areas that we are looking at now is our replacement system: how best to provide those replacements for such a battle."

For specific use in the European theater, the United States has 7000 nuclear warheads; the Warsaw Pact, 3500; with over 650 nuclear warheads controlled by Great Britain and France. The destruction in a European nuclear conflict would be enormous. As CBS News reported, "One nuclear strategist complained that German towns are only two kilotons apart. One nuclear shell from a small missile would devastate a couple of towns at once." "There are two different schools," notes General Wolff Graf von Baudissin, former deputy commander of NATO Europe; "one feels [nuclear weapons] could support, strengthen, and even substitute the conventional forces. But this means, of course, nothing but a nuclear battlefield in Central Europe. It will destroy in hours or days what we have to defend."

Professor Henry Kendall, a physicist at MIT, calculates the consequences of the detonation over Western Europe of between 1500 and 2000 nuclear weapons of varying yields totaling 1000 megatons (MT):

> Such an attack is easily within the capacity of the Soviet Union to carry out. It could kill nearly all the persons in the urban centers of [W]estern Europe and subject those areas to near total destruction.... Indeed one might say the attack runs out of victims and targets.... It is important to recognize that a smaller attack along the general lines we have set forth would still inflict on the struck nations an utterly unprecedented level of destruction. An attack in the range of 2-300 MT could produce well over 100,000,000 casualties along with extensive long term damage to the regional environment and biota .... With the industrial infrastructure essentially eliminated perhaps on a continent-wide basis, the urban centers largely gone... much agricultural land contaminated and with no nearby regions undamaged which could provide aid ... the survivors would face an appalling, very hopeless task of reconstruction.

"The lion is mad"

With two devastating World Wars still fresh in their minds and with an ever more hideous and unimaginably destructive war looming on the horizon, Europeans are taking matters into their own hands. Suddenly government heads must contend with an uncontrollable mass movement that challenges policies which, until now, have been left to the "experts." "It has been like watching a sleeping lion come to life again," said a British activist who had come to NATO headquarters with some 600 other protesters to demonstrate against nuclear weapons. "The lion is mad."

As a grassroots movement, END is highly decentralized, with tactics varying from country to country. Tactics range from mass demonstrations, sit-ins, and petitioning to harassment of U.S. troops and military installations. But for a broad strategy, much of the movement takes its cue from Prof. Edward P. Thompson (historian, prominent disarmament theoretician, and author of "Protest and Survive," the movement's "bible") and Ben ter Veer. Disillusioned with arms control talks as "a cosmetic process" that institutionalized the arms race, both Thompson and ter Veer look to independent grassroots movements to pressure individual governments to take *unilateral* steps in reducing or eliminating nuclear weapon stockpiles. Unilateral actions are far more promising than negotiations in halting the inner momentum of the arms race — while certainly better than nothing, arms negotiations are still negotiations between governments, which have no intrinsic incentive to reduce arms and have many economic-political incentives to increase them. Both will tend to use the negotiating process to regulate each other's arms production to their mutual advantage, unless of course, there is a mass movement generating political pressure from behind. Only then can serious disarmament measures become a reality. "It is important to pursue a policy of unilateral initiatives, trying to change policy in your own country," said ter Veer. "This unilateral action can create indirect pressure on governments and set up a rolling multilateral process."

At the Groningen, Netherlands, Conference on Nuclear War in Europe, sponsored by the Center for Defense Information, Ben ter Veer outlined the movement's effective strategy in his own country:

> The campaign for nuclear disarmament of the Netherlands is based on deep-seated moral notions about weapons of mass destruction [and] on the conviction that the peace movement has the moral obligation to be *politically effective*. Being an outlet for moral unrest and anger only is not enough by far. As a result, we have a movement of 400 groups all over the country. These groups have committed themselves to organize power at the grassroots level within all kinds of local institutions, the church, women's organizations, local branches of political parties, the labour union, environmental groups, and so on. The work of persuading people and the institutions they represent is done in the conviction that no government is able to initiate a policy of radical arms reduction without strong public pressure for such activity.

The disarmament movement must totally reject the policy of nuclear deterrence since "it gives the main adversaries the opportunity to strive at every turn for military superiority and the political destruction of the other system, under the cover of keeping the balance, so-called defensive policies."

The movement must expand to embrace all of Europe, including Eastern Europe. Explains Prof. E. P. Thompson in his eloquent "Letter to America" (*The Nation* 1/24/81), "In the international and especially the European context, each national movement will exchange information and delegations, will support and challenge each other. The movement will encourage a European consciousness in common combat for survival." In this context, one current East European "initiative," the Polish Solidarity movement, and

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"(T)he battleground for the next conventional war will be Europe."–Harold Brown, testifying before Congress in early '81.

the European Disarmament Movement are one and the same struggle. "Both are movements of Europeans for autonomy—away from cold war cliency—and movements, by Europeans, to resume a political space for themselves," says Thompson.

Disarmament activists point out that their ultimate goal carries a potential danger. But the nuclear arms race is viewed as more dangerous than any potential threat from the Soviet Union. Many Europeans simply do not see the logic in being incinerated in order to be "saved." "Perhaps," said one activist, "we can learn from the Poles that nuclear weapons cannot control a people."

What next?

The Netherlands is viewed as the ripest country to begin a disarmament process. A decision against deployment would have significant symbolic effect on other NATO countries and a decision to ban all nuclear weapons would have profound implications. "Such a step would be of little military, but great political significance," notes ter Veer. "It would be large enough to create a really different international situation and to break the existing deadlock, yet sufficiently small to gather the essential domestic support." A Netherlands decision to bar nuclear weapons from that country would boost morale and lend even greater credibility for the disarmament movement, starting a snowballing process of independent arms reduction steps by other European countries.

Norway, the northernmost member of NATO, has already proposed a multilateral declaration of a Scandanavian nuclear free zone, which Norway hopes would be supported by other NATO countries. Acceptance of such a declaration would be politically palatable for Europe NATO, at least, since the zone would cover Norway and Denmark—NATO countries that forbid nuclear weapons on their territory during peacetime—and Sweden and Finland, both of which are neutral. Nuclear free zones could then be expanded to the Netherlands and Belgium, then to Southern Europe, and eventually to the two Germanies as well.

Admittedly, the disarmament movement is facing an uphill climb. But the record of its success so far bodes well for its effectiveness in the future. "Hitherto, this movement has not been able to shake governments," said Joseph Luns, Secretary General of NATO, in a recent interview. But he repeated for emphasis the word *hitherto*.

Many political parties in Western Europe are taking advantage of the anti-missile sentiment, hoping to ride it into political power. In Great Britain, the opposition Labor Party has endorsed unilateral disarmament. In Belgium, the center right movement has come under strong competition from the Flemish Socialist Party with its opposition to TNF.

But the disarmament movement's major political victim could be West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, the politician who first broached the idea of deploying long range missiles in Europe and who has worked hardest to convince other NATO countries to support it. The environmentalist "Green Party" is gaining popularity and increasing competition for the coalition government by running a petition drive against the new missiles. Anti-missile sentiment within his own Social Democrat Party and from the Free Democrats (the junior partner in the West German coalition government) has put Schmidt into an ever more tenuous and uncertain political position. Despite appeals from party regulars to tone down opposition, many of the younger members of the Social Democrats and Free Democrats are the most fervent opponents of long range missile deployment. For example, a recent congress of a Free Democrat youth group called on the Schmidt government to reverse its decision to deploy. Two ministers from Schmidt's own cabinet voted at a party meeting in mid-March in favor of putting before next year's party congress a motion requesting Schmidt to reconsider the decision to accept U.S. Pershing IIs and cruise missiles. A reversal on this matter would be very embarassing to Schmidt and would demoralize NATO ministers even further, since it was argued in the first place that the new missiles were to be a symbol of the Washington-Bonn, U.S.-NATO commitment.

The European Nuclear Disarmament Movement presents one of the few real causes for optimism for a future otherwise dominated by MIRVs, MARVs, the "integrated battlefield," and the ever-looming mushroom cloud. Particularly in light of the current U.S. administration's foreign policy, the movement could become the major obstacle standing between America and World War III.

The disarmament movement's promise lies in its demonstration of the power of popular grassroots activism in an area thought by many to be immune from political pressure —the nuclear arms race. It serves notice to governments all over the world that, as Dutch Army Col. Gerard Berghof put it, "Unless there is a determined body politic behind a nation's arms, the weapons are useless." It serves as both hope and inspiration for an American nuclear disarmament movement waiting to be born. ❑

Jay Hilgartner was the research director for the Libertarian Party and the assistant research director for the Clark for President campaign. He is currently a student at George Mason University.

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THE DEMISE OF NATO: A MODEST PROPOSAL

"[Alliances] are only means by which the rulers of states precipitate the people into wars from which they benefit either by covering up their mistakes or by carrying out their plots against freedom."

– Marquis de Condorcet

SHELDON RICHMAN

At this writing, no one can predict with certainty what the Soviet government will do about the 16-month-long defiance of the state by the Polish people, led by the labor union Solidarity and its spokesman, Lech Walesa. Sympathetic observers worry that the Soviets may intervene, but it appears that the crusty Soviet bureaucrats know very well the huge risks that would be entailed by an invasion of Poland.

These risks include not only the risk of getting bogged down in long, bloody street fights, but also the risk of a massive loss of prestige in the Third World, and of the final crack-up of the Warsaw Pact. The Russians cannot know what forces they would unleash in their own jurisdiction should they invade.

In the now typical fashion of the Reagan administration, the U.S. government has warned the Soviets that a Polish intervention would be a grave act, while at the same time doing and saying nearly everything possible to goad them into punishing the Polish. Even before his inauguration, Ronald Reagan and his troops began their bellicose vaunting, the most egregious case being Richard Pipes's warning that the U.S. would go to war if the Soviets didn't change their system. (This warning was later disavowed by the White House.)

Since then, Reagan, Secretary of State Alexander Haig, and Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger have continued to take opportunities to provoke the Russians. They have pressed the western European nations and Japan to increase military spending, and western Europe is being urged to accept 572 cruise and Pershing II missiles and the neutron bomb. This has had one good by-product: the spawning of a new peace movement in Europe, described by Jay Hilgartner elsewhere in this issue, a movement which has prompted Reagan national security adviser Richard Allen to denounce its "pacifist tendencies" and the "contemptible better-red-than-dead slogans of a generation ago."

The moves to establish warmer relations between the administration and China are also putting the Polish peo-

Secretary of State Alexander Haig, one of the administration's prime movers in the push to beef up NATO and provoke the Soviets.

BUDD GRAY/PICTURE GROUP

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ple in jeopardy. The agreement to sell arms to China, plus the announcement that the U.S. and China jointly run a listening post near the Russian border, could do more to provoke a Russian invasion of Poland than anything Lech Walesa could do.

Nor has Reagan ameliorated the situation by proclaiming that the Russian empire is in its twilight, ready to fall of its own weight and, for that reason, deadlier than ever. This is not to suggest that the U.S. administration *wants* the Russians to roll into Warsaw, but rather to invoke the old maxim that in foreign policy, intentions and consequences are — as the experts would put it — asymmetrical.

The ironic conclusion — contrary to the establishment view — is that the American-West European alliance is increasing, not decreasing, Soviet temptations regarding Poland. The only thing that could induce the Russians to take the enormous risks of invasion is the fear that continued Polish liberalization would be the entree for a growing Western threat. Once this is understood, the policy prescriptions for taking the heat off Poland are far different from those of Ronald Reagan.

Russian discomfort with the Polish turbulence has great potential for instruction. That a system which pays homage to the rights of workers cannot bear the existence of a workers association independent of the state should teach people around the world that something is amiss with socialism. The problem is, the U.S. government seems intent on demonstrating that there is no alternative to meddling, bullying, exploitative states. What is there to inspire people to repudiate socialism if the alternative is what *they know as* "capitalism"; that is, U.S. imperialism?

And yet, there is a real alternative to such imperialism: a radical program of nonintervention in foreign and domestic policy — the free market applied worldwide in the time-honored tradition of Richard Cobden and John Bright. Such a policy would enable the so-called nonaligned nations to stop fearing U.S. hegemony and turn their wrath toward the Soviets when and if they encroach. This, in turn, would discourage the Soviets from adventurism, including perhaps an invasion of Poland. Until the U.S. adopts such a policy, members of the Third World and other countries will see friendship with the Soviet Union as a necessary counterweight to American encroachment.

Part of this program would be a U.S. pullout from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. There was a time when this would have been unthinkable, but no more. Articles rethinking the whole rationale of NATO have appeared in *Foreign Affairs, The Washington Monthly, The National Review,* and *The Wall Street Journal.* In a *Journal* article entitle "NATO at a Dead End," neoconservative Irving Kristol exposed the dismal failure of U.S. postwar European policy. The proposal for new theater nuclear forces was the occasion for the revelation: "Suddenly the peoples of Western Europe have awakened to the fact that Europe's position in the 'balance of terror' is way off center, that the new missiles simply guarantee that, given the absence of military parity at all levels, a conflict with the Soviet Union could have as its only *certain* outcome European annihilation."

The National Review — Bill Buckley's magazine — ran a guest editorial by John P. Roche last July entitled "Is NATO an Initiative Whose Time Has Passed?" While Roche argues the wrong case (he thinks the Europeans are ingrates when they object to nuclear missiles on their soil), he concludes that the American people are not served by the alliance.

The Polish situation and the ensuing general reassessment of Europe offer an important opportunity for a different slant on the matter. We must begin with a little history.

NATO was founded on April 4, 1949, under curious circumstances. In the aftermath of World War II, the United States was the only power left intact. The Soviet Union was weak and worried, having lost at least 20 million people during four years of fighting Germany. As everyone knows, the U.S. government was the only one with atomic weapons then and the only one ever to have used them in warfare. Since the Stalin government had been a U.S. ally during the war and largely cooperative as the war wound down, it is hard to see how the establishment of NATO could have been interpreted as a defensive measure, especially since the United Nations had been set up ostensibly to resolve international disputes. The U.S. decision to join a European alliance and to station troops in Europe — not to mention the decision to establish 400 bases around the Soviet Union by 1949 — could not help but frighten the historically paranoid Russians.

The Truman Doctrine is critical to the analysis, of course. Harry Truman made his famous Congressional speech on March 12, 1947, right after the British informed him that they could not afford to defend their interests in Greece and Turkey. Painting the world situation as a mortal contest between liberty and tyranny, Truman asked Congress to approve aid for the Greek and Turkish regimes in their battles against insurgents. He did not mention that Greece and Turkey were dictatorships and that holding up the British Empire was something less that a pro-liberty enterprise. Nor did he mention that Stalin opposed the Greek uprising. "[It] must be stopped, and as quickly as possible," Stalin had said. This was consistent with Stalin's conservatism and his wish not to antagonize the Allies.

The Truman Doctrine is usually explained as the U.S. reaction to Russian aggression in Eastern Europe. But the chronology does not support this. The doctrine was proclaimed two days *after* the opening of a critical meeting of

In 1949, even John Foster Dulles did not believe that the Soviets were planning military conquest.

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

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Allied foreign ministers in Moscow; the proclamation badly upset the meeting and set the stage for the next 30 years of mutual suspicion. Truman's doctrine was announced 10 months *after* the Russians withdrew their forces from Iran (followed by U.S. entry there via dollar diplomacy). The doctrine preceded the communist coup in Czechoslovakia by 11 months; this is the incident usually referred to as the Soviet instigation of the Cold War. Finally, Truman's declaration of Cold War came 17 months *before* Russia's blockade of Berlin.

Had Truman thought Stalin was behind the Greek uprising, it might have been arguable that the doctrine was in part a response to Russian meddling. But this fails as an explanation when one realizes that Truman thought up the idea long before the Greek episode. According to *New York Times* columnist Arthur Krock, a Truman intimate, Truman formulated the doctrine in 1945 and simply waited for the right time to announce it. Thus the Truman Doctrine—the opening shot in the Cold War that has shaped our world — is revealed as a tissue-thin pretense for U.S. dominance in Europe. Even George F. Kennan (who is sometimes credited for the doctrine because of the article he wrote on containment under the pseudonym of X in 1946) disapproved of the Truman Doctrine. In the light of all these facts, the conventional explanation for NATO appears somewhat swiss-cheese-like.

NATO's precursor, the Brussels Union of March 1948, is traditionally regarded as a response to the Czech communist coup and the blockade of Berlin. Yet some significant people believed this was inappropriate. As Kennan wrote in his memoirs:

> I regarded the anxieties of the Europeans as a little silly; this was not, it seemed to me, the time to start talking about military defense and preparations. . . . I must point out that both of the events that threw official Washington into such a dither — the consolidation of communist power in Czechoslovakia and the inauguration of the attempt by the Russians to force the Western allies out of Berlin—were defensive reactions on the Soviet side to the initial success of the Marshall Plan initiative and to the preparations now being undertaken on the Western side to set up a separate German government in Western Germany. [*Memoirs: 1925-1950*]

Kennan's observations were similar to that of Sen. Robert Taft, one of the few to refuse to be stampeded by Truman:

> I believe that the tone of the President's statement that his confidence in ultimate world peace has been shaken is unfortunate. . . . I myself know of no particular indication of Russian intentions to undertake military aggression beyond the sphere of influence which was originally assigned to the Russians. The situation in Czechoslovakia is indeed a tragic one; but the Russian influence has been predominant in Czechoslovakia since the end of the war. The Communists are merely consolidating their position in Czechoslovakia; but there has been no military aggression, since the end of the war. [Quoted in *Free World Colossus by David Horowitz*]

Taft was well aware of the Soviet concern with the western rim. Three times in the twentieth century Russia had been invaded through Eastern Europe, twice by Germany and once by *Poland* in 1920. (The Poles captured Moscow in the seventeenth century, initiating a long tradition of Russian distrust of the Poles.) But Stalin's fear did not immediately lead him to seek to absorb Eastern Europe. According to the late Yugoslav leader, Tito, Stalin merely wished to have weak and unhostile states on his border. In fact, his exacting harsh reparations from the Eastern Europeans and the attempted thwarting of Tito's independent course indicate that Stalin did not want Eastern Europe to be the rocks on which the wartime alliance would crash.

Tito was once quoted as saying that Stalin changed his mind about Eastern Europe *after* the Truman Doctrine was proclaimed because he feared U.S. interventionist dollar-diplomacy and because he believed he needed a "depth of defense zone" against U.S. planes bearing atom bombs.

Harry S. Truman, author of the Truman Doctrine, which set the stage for 30 years of U.S.-Soviet suspicion.

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Turning back to Yugoslavia for a moment, it is significant that, despite the bitterness between Tito and Stalin, the Soviets never invaded Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia had not been assigned to the Russians in the war settlement, but rather was designated as a buffer between the Russian and British spheres. Stalin's rebuffing of Tito and his support for the Yugoslav monarchy was another in a series of Russian efforts to placate the Allies.

In reading about this era, one cannot but be impressed by the *number* of important people who did not believe the Soviets were a military threat to anyone. As Kennan, head of Secretary of State Marshall's planning staff at the time, later wrote, "The Russians had no idea of using regular military strength against us." He believed in the "desirability of avoiding anything that could appear to the Soviet leaders as an aggressive encirclement of their country," but was ignored.

In 1948, U.S. Soviet specialist Charles Bohlen affirmed Kennan's view,

> The most dangerous period has been in the immediate postwar years, 1945-47, when the U.S. military establishment was rapidly disintegrating and the American public had not yet been alerted to the Russian peril; it is significant that the Soviet army did not move during that period. [Quoted in *Shattered Peace,* by Daniel Yergin]

Even John Foster Dulles, later the architect of "brinksmanship," added his voice to this chorus in 1949:

> So far as is humanly possible to judge, the Soviet government, under conditions now prevailing, does not contemplate the use of war as an instrument of its national policy. I do not know of any responsible official, military or civilian, in this government or any government, who believes that the Soviet government now plans conquest by open military aggression. [Quoted in *Free World Colossus*]

Dulles, Bohlen, Kennan, and Taft were not oddballs; their judgment was shared by more than six major American leaders, including James Forrestal and Gen. Walter Bedell Smith.

By 1950, Dulles repeated his view of Soviet intentions, but added a *caveat* that is particularly relevant to our day:

> While the Soviet government has no present intention of resorting to war as an instrument of national policy, nevertheless, it can be assumed that the Soviet state would use the Red Army if its leaders felt that their homeland was imminently and seriously threatened. [Quoted in *A Foreign Policy for Americans,* by Robert Taft]

This is precisely what U.S. postwar policy has made the Soviet leaders feel; this more than anything else explains the last three decades.

In light of this history, why was NATO formed? Perhaps the real reason was stated by Averill Harriman, former ambassador to the Soviet Union, when he said during the NATO debate that if the alliance were not formed "there would be a reorientation" in Europe, a "restrengthening of those that believe in appeasement and neutrality." This sounds much like Alexander Haig condemning European plans to build a natural-gas pipeline with the Soviets. Sen. Tom Connally also hinted at the time at the motives behind NATO. It is, he said, "but the logical extension of the principle of the Monroe Doctrine."

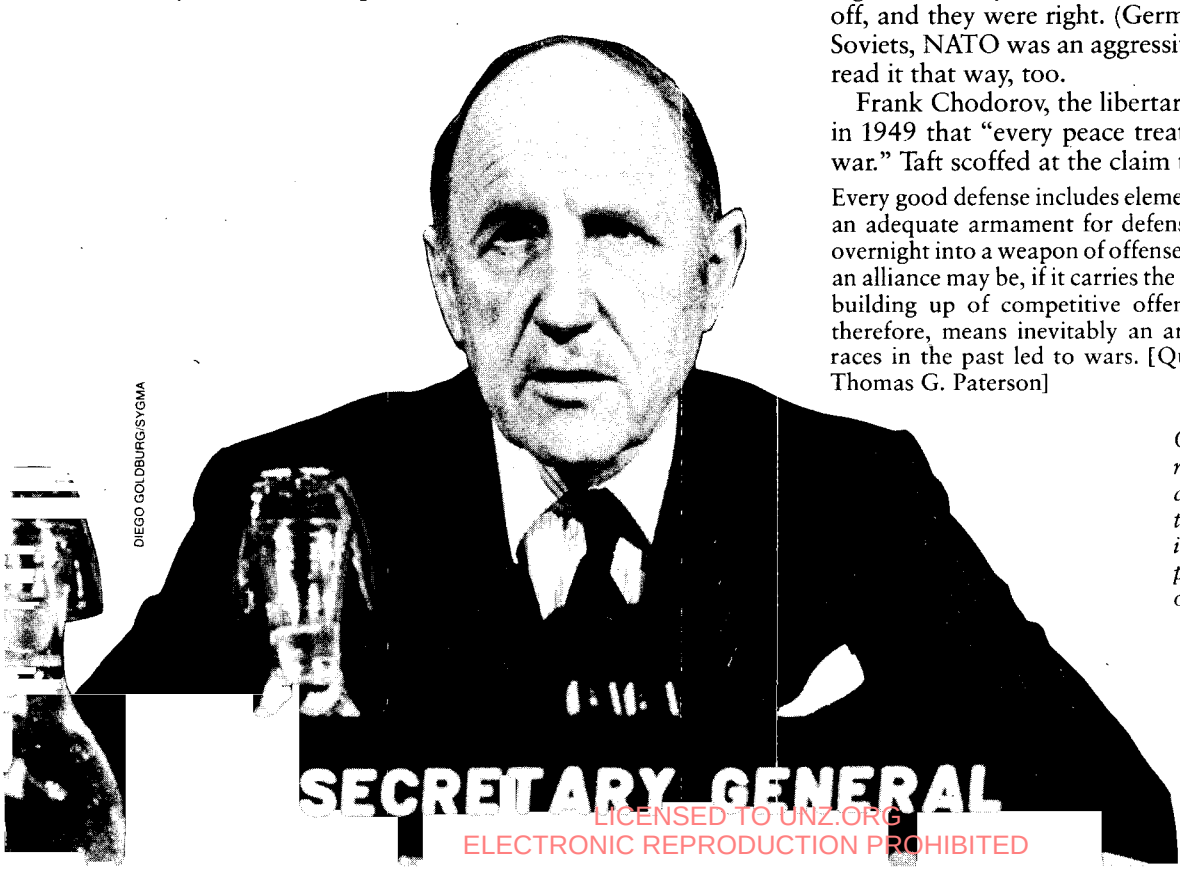
NATO established a drastically new role for the U.S. in world affairs, as Taft and others pointed out with alarm. For the first time, the U.S. was *pledged* to enter feuds in Europe. No doubt Truman and his aides believed it would be difficult to play world policemen were every European nation to make a separate peace with Russia and were there no tripwire to justify U.S. intervention.

Shortly after NATO's founding, a new rationalization was employed: U.S. foreign policy after the war centered on the atom bomb aimed at the Soviets. But there was a gap in the strategy because if the Soviets, fearing an atomic attack, pushed into Western Europe, the U.S. would have to drop the bomb there—or not drop it at all. NATO was expected to stop or slow down this move.

The Soviets, seeing the formation of NATO after the Marshall Plan and the consolidation of western Germany, couldn't help but smell a threat. They knew that the rearming of Germany and its admission to NATO couldn't be far off, and they were right. (Germany joined in 1955.) To the Soviets, NATO was an aggressive symbol. Some Americans read it that way, too.

Frank Chodorov, the libertarian writer and editor, noted in 1949 that "every peace treaty is an agreement to make war." Taft scoffed at the claim that NATO was defensive:

> Every good defense includes elements of offense. We cannot have an adequate armament for defense which cannot be converted overnight into a weapon of offense. . . .[N]o matter how defensive an alliance may be, if it carries the obligation to arm, it means the building up of competitive offensive armaments. This treaty, therefore, means inevitably an armament race, and armament races in the past led to wars. [Quoted in *Cold War Critics* by Thomas G. Paterson]



On September 30, NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns, criticized the Reagan administration for allowing the impression to grow that it "is preoccupied with the pursuit of military supremacy."

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Taft stressed that NATO would be a self-fulfilling prophecy. "...It necessarily divides the world into two camps....This whole program is not a peace program; *it is a war program.*" (Emphasis added. Quoted in *Not to the Swift,* by Justus Doenecke)

Kennan, once again looking back, has aptly identified the tragedy of NATO:

> All these great objectives... the solution of the problem of German unification, the removal of the division of the continent generally, the reintegration of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe into the European Community, and the development of European unity on a continental scale ... were sacrificed at a stroke to the erection of a military defense *against an attack no one was planning*.... So egregious a misplacement of emphasis could have proceeded, it seems to me, only from the minds of people... preoccupied with military problems to the detriment of all serious political thought. [Emphasis added. Quoted in *Free World Colossus*]

This historical journey is intended to show that the threat NATO represents to the Soviets is nothing new. Today, the only change is that the situation is worse. In the continued absence of a Soviet threat to Western Europe, the talk about rebuilding a U.S.-dominated NATO is dangerous. Even apart from this history, it makes no sense. "If western Europe were to coalesce," writes foreign policy analyst Earl Ravenal, "it would be the second most powerful entity in the world—more powerful than the Soviet Union, and in some respects more so than the United States." Western Europe has a larger population than the Warsaw Pact (400 million), "equivalent economic potential" ($2 trillion GNP), comparable military manpower, and British and French nuclear forces.

From the hysteria in the Reagan administration, one would never guess that NATO spent more than the Warsaw Pact nations each year of the 1970s. (1979: $212 billion for NATO [including U.S. spending], $175 billion for the Pact [including Soviet spending].) NATO will cost Americans $109 billion this year, and $2.45 trillion in the next decade, if Reagan's original appropriation requests are met.

But the case against U.S. involvement in NATO does *not* rest on Western European military or economic superiority. NATO is dangerous by its very nature. As Ravenal explains:

> More than thirty years after the formation of NATO, the defense of Western Europe still rests on the proposition that an American president will invite the destruction of U.S. cities and the incineration of 100 million citizens to repel a Soviet incursion or resist an ultimatum in Western Europe. That proposition cuts both ways. In one sense, America's war plan—never rejected by any president from Truman to Carter or by any secretary of defense from George Marshall to Harold Brown—is the first use of nuclear weapons, "if necessary," to defend Europe. Thus America threatens to turn local defeat into global holocaust. But in another sense, America's nuclear commitment is not so evident. ["Death Comes to the Arch Alliance," *Inquiry,* Oct 27, 1980]

On the dubious nature of the commitment, Ravenal quotes Henry Kissinger, who told a conference on NATO in 1979, "We must face the fact that it is absurd to base the strategy of the West on the credibility of the threat of mutual suicide."

In Ravenal's view, NATO is in hopeless disarray, a condition aggravated by U.S. pressure for European acceptance of land-based nuclear missiles. Understandably, many Europeans wish not to become a sponge in the warmongers' game. This is the final nail in NATO's coffin. The attempt to shift a prospective war to Europe is both cynical and foolish — cynical because of its inhumanity; foolish because it assumes that the Soviets will not retaliate against the U.S. if the missiles that are launched start from European soil.

Taft, Kennan, and the others stand vindicated. They warned us more than 30 years ago that by intensifying the threat to the Soviets, we threaten ourselves.

The ramifications for Poland should be obvious. The most the U.S. government can do to encourage Polish liberalization is to cease threatening the Soviet Union. No affirmative measure can achieve this. The injunction against intervention fits nicely with the entire libertarian analysis of activist foreign policy. As William Graham Sumner wrote, one cannot serve peace by preparing for war; one should decide what one wants—peace or war—and prepare for *it.*

Kennan, in his latest book, *The Cloud of Danger,* writes of the "congenital deficiencies of a government such as our own from the standpoint of the conduct of foreign policy." In other words, a government bound, to any extent, by considerations of freedom will not have the discretion and privacy necessary to foreign adventurism and imperialism. Despite Kennan's misplaced confidence in the U.S. government—as Garet Garrett once said, "The revolution *was*"—Kennan does get at something libertarians cannot emphasize too much: Liberty cannot exist in a garrison state. Peace and freedom demand withdrawal from NATO and other alliances and the full implementation of nonintervention. ❑

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Joseph Stalin: did his fear of the Truman Doctrine force him to absorb Eastern Europe?

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Nonintervention and the Reagan Foreign Policy

A Dialogue at the LP/10 Convention

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RON PAUL

When I first ran for Congress, I was not primarily concerned about foreign policy, but about economics, inflation, and a sound monetary system. But as time has passed, I have realized that the two areas are closely connected. I do not believe that you can isolate foreign policy from economic and monetary policy, because they are tied together. Our foreign policy is linked to the monetary system, to the World Bank, multilateral development banks, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Export-Import Bank, and to subsidies to Third World nations. When you see the flow of money from your pockets to Third World nations or to Communist nations, and back into the coffers of the New York banks, you can see that it is an interrelated system. We cannot consider the monetary system, or taxes and spending, without considering foreign policy.

The dialogue between Ron Paul and Earl Ravenal was one of the highlights of the Denver LP/10 Convention last August.

LESLEE J. NEWMAN

The policy I would like to see implemented is a nonintervention foreign policy. Now, if you're talking about nonintervention because you would like to construct an ideal world in your mind, that's one thing. But if you want the government to adopt policies of nonintervention, those policies have to be popular and they have to be attractive—not to the politicians in Washington, but to the millions of Americans who have to make the decisions. (And they do make the decisions. Even though a lot of things seem railroaded through in Washington, it is done with the consent of the people.) Our job is to make the policy of nonintervention attractive enough to get the people to tell their representatives in Washington that that's what they want.

There's very little real support for such a policy in Washington today. There is in fact only one foreign policy debate in Washington, and that debate is over which side to help. Should the United States give money to Somoza or to the Sandanistas? To the right-wing dictators, the so-called pro-Americans, or to the left wing, anti-American dictators? Even the extreme liberal element in Congress, who may sometimes appear to be noninterventionist, do not advocate true noninterventionism; they're noninterventionist when they think it might be beneficial to socialism. But that doesn't mean that there's no support for a nonintervention-ionist foreign policy in this country. I think there's a lot of support.

The purpose of our foreign policy should be to preserve peace and defend the country against any attack. And I believe that this should be presented to the people as a pro-American policy. The American people want national defense. They want to be secure. They don't want to be threatened. This is an important reason that Ronald Reagan got elected. He said, we're not strong enough; we're weak in our defense. And it's true—we're very weak. We're weak in a military sense, but above all, we're weak in the dedication we have to our principles of liberty in this country, and therefore we have a weak defense. And the American people know it, even though they may not understand the details. The people are with us, but the message has not been presented in the right way.

It has been very detrimental to the noninterventionist cause that it is often presented as a leftist or socialist or even Communist position. On the few occasions that I have found allies in Washington to support, say, the position of taking troops out of Korea, it has been a tragedy that these allies belong to the small element that is considered to be pro-communist, and that even though they may be right on the issue, they support it for the wrong reason. The pro-defense policy, the noninterventionist policy, has to be championed because it is *beneficial to us;* then the American people will listen and will support noninterventionism.

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It is the planners who promote tariffs, protectionism, and competition between nations that are the isolationists.

I want to make one comment here on the word *isolationism*. Obviously, the policy we advocate lends itself to that characterization. However, the word isolationism does us more harm than good—it's a negative word. Anytime I discuss foreign policy on a TV or radio show, the first thing the commentator comes back with is, "Oh, you're an isolationist, one of those throwbacks to ancient times, way before America was a real country. Now today, in the real world, you can't be an isolationist."

I try to deflate this argument by letting them have the term instead of defending it or using it. I turn around and say, "That's wrong. The last thing I am is an isolationist. I believe in freedom, open borders, and a free market. Noninterventionists are the true internationalists. People and goods cross borders. People mingle. It is the planners, those who promote inflation and a planned economy, who become the economic isolationists. They're the ones who promote tariffs, and they're the ones who promote so much protectionism and so much competition between *nations,* rather than individuals, that they become militaristic and nationalistic, and that leads to war. So it is those who have proposed that we have inflation and intervention who are the true isolationists, who would wall us off and cut off trade and restrain our citizens from traveling, which they have already started to do."

It would be too difficult to reeducate people into thinking of the word *isolationism* as a positive term. It's been accepted as a negative term for the past 30 or 40 years.

Still, I believe that there should be no intervention and no alliances with foreign nations. This includes the so-called disarmament treaties. I know there is a split on this among libertarians; some support disarmament treaties such as SALT I and SALT II, while others oppose them. But I still find negotiating a treaty internationally, even though it's for a purpose that you think is beneficial, totally inconsistent with libertarianism. Just the fact of negotiating and signing treaties is illogical, in my estimation, and seems even more so when you think about the people with whom you are negotiating. Communist dictators don't believe in truth; truth to them is relative. It's determined by the State. So it seems at best unwise to think that the Soviets understand such treaty negotiations on your terms. The purpose of a foreign policy is to provide a national defense. Period.

In discussions, I always try to refer to the *military* budget, rather than the *defense* budget. Most of the money is spent in a negative way. It acts in inverse proportion—the worse our defense gets, the more money we spend; and the more money we spend, the weaker our defense. This also is an issue that people understand if it is presented to them properly.

For example, I took a poll in my district, asking how many people thought it would be important to stop the financing of our rich allies—that's a bit of a leading question—like Japan or Germany. Now, you'd expect that the lead might get a majority of the people to agree, but I was surprised to find that *95 percent* of them said, cut it off; we've had it! You know, all I have to do is talk about inflation and say, "What about the way the Japanese take the money they might otherwise spend on their defense and give it to their automobile and steel companies?" and I can get the most conservative, conventional Republican audience on their feet, clamoring to cut off the money. They're endorsing a noninterventionist foreign policy, without knowing it. Their minds really are with us when they have the facts, although they are the same people who voted for Ronald Reagan, who may *double* the military budget in the next two years — an interpretation of the need for national defense that would really bring us to our knees.

I believe that the military budget will be Reagan's nemesis, despite the fact that the media will portray any cut in the amount of military appropriations he decides to ask for as an absolute cut, even if such a cut means that instead of raising the military budget by $100 billion, he's now proposing to raise it by $90 billion. Just as the media were very important in presenting the $60 billion additional spending in the Reagan domestic budget proposals as a "slash," because it was $40 billion less than the budget Carter had proposed.

As a starter, instead of increasing the military budget, we should cut it in half and eliminate all transfer payments, which are still the biggest part of that budget; an estimated 50 to 60 percent of the military budget is spent to defend other countries. By eliminating these transfer payments we could save up to $50 billion now being spent in Europe and about $30 billion in Japan.

What should we do with that money? We should cut it out of the budget. But even with that cut, we can raise military pay. We live in a modern age, and we should have highly paid technicians to provide our defense.

And we should improve that defense. It seems to me that the only major threat we face is the possibility of a nuclear attack, and yet we signed SALT I, which said we would not develop something that could shoot a nuclear missile down. I think, on the contrary, it makes sense to spend money on an anti-ballistic missile. Instead of divesting ourselves of nuclear missiles, a more modest approach would be to suggest to the Soviets that we will retain nuclear weapons to hit the major military targets in the Soviet Union. That sounds very adequate, but by doing that, we could eliminate a good many of our nuclear weapons. And I think that the MX, which would add another 3 or 4 thousand, is obviously unnecessary — if we have 7, 8, or 9 thousand of these weapons capable of reaching Russia now, how many more do we need? By saying that we will keep enough weapons to destroy all military targets, our policy will be seen as one of tremendous power and tremendous strength, rather than one which is negative and against the defense of America. And yet we can save a lot of money. We don't have talk about new weapons like MX missiles, Stealth bombers, B-1 bombers, and M-1 tanks.

I always say to conservatives when I talk to them—they're sort of aghast about the M-1 tank—well, you know, the tank doesn't even do that well. We have a few problems with it. It does well on concrete, but it doesn't do so well in the mud. And we can't put it on an airplane. If the purpose is to defend the country (I say), where are you anticipating this tank attack from? Through Alaska, or through Mexico, or just where? They say, well, they might come across Germany.

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And I say, did you know they just cut the defense budget in Germany by $500 million? Your kids can't buy a home and you can't buy a car, and you want to build this tank for the Germans? Why don't they build it?

They say they never thought of that.

I was asked about the neutron bomb on TV the other day. I would estimate that in my district 80 percent of the people endorse the neutron bomb because they see it as a symbol of strength. To them it's a symbol of defending America. So obviously I don't say, "The bomb is unnecessary; forget about it." Instead, I say, the neutron bomb sounds like a pretty sophisticated weapon, but when is it best used? If you have a few thousand tanks coming after you. But I still don't anticipate a tank attack. Maybe Germany needs it. Let the Germans build it, if it's a good weapon for Europe.

People are very receptive to this kind of explanation, even though they probably wouldn't have been 10 or 15 years ago. But now, in an economic sense, they're desperate. They've heard stories about drug addition and inefficiency in the army, and about the amount of money we could save by bringing troops home, and they're ready to listen, because they are starting to hurt.

Foreign aid is another obviously important issue. Again, foreign aid is always discussed in terms of which enemy is going to get it, the right or the left? One approach I use here is to point out that there have been 14 or more major conflicts since World War II in which we have contributed the weapons to both sides. Do we want to continue doing that? If I'm told that we ought to give weapons to our friends, I say, but who are our friends? Today they're friends; tomorrow, enemies. Was the Shah our friend? He's really helping us out over there now, isn't he? Friends may turn on you, or they may be overthrown; then the money's down the drain. Again, people will listen to that.

I mentioned before that our foreign policy is pro-American; it shouldn't be defended because it would be beneficial to a Communist dictator. But you can always present the evidence of who the enemy really is. Their system is *weak*. I point that out, but I also point out that just a few months ago, for example, the administration gave $120 million at 8 percent interest to Communist Rumania to build two nuclear power generators. The Communist system isn't pro-freedom; it's the destruction of freedom, so even though it is weak, it is still a threat. Our subsidizing it has to stop, and if we do stop subsidizing it, I think it would collapse.

If a government has a noninterventionist foreign policy, does that mean that it should totally ignore what's happening in the world? No, an administration has a role, and part of that role is getting information out to the people, telling them what's happening. If there's a Communist invasion of Afghanistan, I think the people should know, and we should use moral suasion to get the people to understand what's happening: The Soviets are a bunch of gangsters who invaded the country. And I would get rid of the restrictions which forbid American citizens to voluntarily send arms and assistance to freedom fighters in other parts of the world.

I believe in free trade. There are times when one might be very tempted to say, let's cut off trade; they are hoodlums. But I would always like the government to lean as far as possible toward allowing citizens to trade, until we were in actual armed conflict, or at least very close to it. However, people could boycott and use public opinion to try to influence American companies not to carry on such trade—and hold them responsible if they do.

The policies that we all advocate are so important, and the country is so ripe for them right now. It is up to us to defend these policies, and in the right way. We who believe in freedom must, in a very strong way, promote the position that says, if a country is worth defending and if it is valued by its citizens, it can be defended. First, by not inflating the currency to provide the financing for war — this would restrict all of our government's involvements. And second, by every one of us assuming some responsibility, not leaving our country's defense to 18-year-olds. If we believe in our freedom and it's of *value* to us, we would respond and provide the defense necessary, if we were truly threatened.

In the era in which we had a gold standard coupled with a noninterventionist foreign policy, essentially we never fought on foreign soil. (We certainly didn't fight in Europe!) In this century, we've had an interventionist foreign policy and had the Federal Reserve System systematically inflating our currency—and we've had nothing but war. If we accept the principles of sound money, nonintervention, and nonconscription, I believe that, once again, we will live in a peaceful era. ❑

Ron Paul is a Representative from Texas.

LESLEE J. NEWMAN

EARL C. RAVENAL

I'm going to discuss a different aspect of the question of defense and foreign policy, complementary, I think, to Congressman Paul's point that our policy is something that should be made attractive to the American people. The message, I agree with him, should be presented in the right way. Attractiveness alone, however, might not be a viable basis for the future of a noninterventionist foreign policy.

Much of the current debate in this country about foreign policy alternatives is conducted—by proponents as well as by critics of the Reagan foreign and military policies—on the basis of a competition in attractiveness, in the appeal of values. They want to know, if you criticize our foreign deployments, our large defense expenditures, well, what values do *you* have? As if, for some reason, you might *lack* values if you oppose an interventionist foreign policy. I always retort that the essential question about our foreign and military policies is not, substantively, their *attractiveness*—because I must admit that those who want to defend every country in the world and who assume that it will cost nothing and will involve no risks, are probably putting out superficially the most attractive of all policies: They want to

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stabilize the structure of the international system. They want to persuade us that this will not exact any penalties in terms of our resources, our efforts, our freedoms.

And, of course, many aspects of the noninterventionist program are not in that strict sense *attractive*. But they do represent *sensible* and *necessary* accommodations by this country, both to the international situation (which we can no longer control) and to our domestic situation (in terms of our economy and our freedoms), which inhibit the United States in a global adventure or a series of interventionist escapades in the world. That's the hard message that needs to be gotten across. There will be what people call *losses* in the world. There will still be what people call *threats* in the world. The solution is not to wish them away, or to say that they don't exist, as many critics do; the problems and the threats will exist. What is at stake is the question of whether the United States has within its political and social system and within its economic resources the capacity to control the behavior of 150 nations in the world, if you count both adversaries and friends. Or, putting it another way, whether we have the continued capacity any longer to defend half the world against the other half. Should we even be embarking as a nation upon the enterprise of defending 100 nations in the world from their enemies, and in many cases from their own worst tendencies? And to that question the hard answer is no, we should not be doing that, even though there might well be some slippage and some friction and some problems in the world as a result of our not doing those things that we've become accustomed as a nation to doing over the last 35 or 40 years (indeed, since the turn of the century).

When I got back from a trip to Europe several weeks ago, I noticed that, current in the American press, in the editorials of major newspapers, and weekly and monthly magazines, was the criticism that Reagan did not *have* a foreign policy. A typical expression of that was a *New Republic* editorial. "Does the Reagan Administration Have A Foreign Policy?" which complained that at his press conference last week Reagan said yes, he does have a foreign policy; only he doesn't plan to make a *speech* to tell us what it is—as if that were some kind of integral flaw in an administration's conduct. In fastening those critiques upon the administration, the liberals seem not even to understand what the foreign policy process is all about. *Of course* this administration has a foreign policy. It *has to have* a foreign policy, by definition, at any moment. The question is, what foreign policy? It has a foreign policy, but it might be a very wrong foreign policy.

For all its false starts, diplomatic gaffes, ill-conceived utterances, and all the rest, the Reagan administration's foreign policy is, essentially the same foreign policy that this country has had at least since the inception of the Cold War 35 or 40 years ago, and in another definition, for 80 or 85 years—since the turn of the twentieth century.

Now the Reagan administration does embody the ironic virtue of being more staunch and determined and consistent—in a strange but true sense of the word—in its implementation of this inherited, constant American foreign policy. And therefore, also ironically, it is bound to display in more consistent and more inevitable form the vices of that overall policy orientation of the United States for the past 35 years. Thus, through attempting to implement that interventionist policy—that policy of alliances, that policy of deterrence—the Reagan administration will, perversely, contribute to the broadening and the intelligibility of the foreign policy debate. It will do so precisely because it is willing to attempt to spend what might be necessary to implement that extensive interventionist foreign policy, and to risk what might be necessary to carry it out and make it credible in the world. It is only when an administration is willing to do all that, that the vices of that interventionist foreign policy will be brought very sharply (in budgetary terms and in terms of the risk of war) to the scrutiny of the American public, which has to pay and has to risk in order to support such a policy.

There is a funny cartoon in the September issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, an ironic cartoon. A voter is sitting dismally in his chair, saying, In '64, I voted for Johnson because he had promised peace, but he betrayed me, escalated the war; skipping a few—in '76, I voted for Carter because he promised to cut military expenditures, but instead he kept raising the military budget year after year. Finally, the voter says, I've figured it out. I realize that politicians always do the opposite of what they promise. So I voted for Reagan. *But he's doing exactly what he said he would do!* That cartoon makes the essential point. The standard, run-of-the-mill liberal critics seem to insist on picking on superficial vices of character and personality and behavior, quirks of the day-to-day conduct of the Reagan administration. I would eschew those kinds of critiques almost entirely, and concentrate on the deeper level on which this basic American foreign policy orientation is flawed, and must be replaced by something diametrically opposed to it.

All of us, in focusing on foreign policy issues and foreign policy contentions—both in criticizing the policies of the present administration and in inventing an alternative policy—must concentrate on the *objective* situation. First, on the situation in terms of how the world is developing: the structure of the international system, the conditions that are unfolding that will make it more and more difficult for a single country like the United States to try to govern the conduct of 150 nations, or to defend 100 nations against their natural enemies. And, second, on the objective conditions that pertain in our own country: in the limits of our economy and in the freedoms we're straining to preserve and restore. Both of these, the economic and the libertarian aspects, form constraints, inevitably, on the ability of any American administration to mobilize strength and resources from our country and to project American power abroad. Those are the objective conditions, and it's always with reference to and within those objective conditions that one must level critiques against the administration and form alternative foreign policies. Ultimately, the case for any foreign and military policy, whether it's containment and rearmament (which is the game going on now) or retrenchment and arms reduction, must be made in these terms. And what's happening, in brief, is that the evolving international system is posing greater challenges than before, but it also requires greater costs and greater risks in order to achieve less secure and less ample gains. And our own domestic system—social, economic, political—imposes constraints that we should have recognized from the lessons of the Vietnam War, constraints that are becoming much more troublesome for any American leader who dreams of restoring the global dominance of the United States.

Most critics, unfortunately, do not accept an argument based on these objective conditions in the international system and in the American social and economic system. What they try to do is to invent panaceas, middle solutions. You find very few critics, except, ironically, a few of the extreme hawks, that are willing to put before the American people a bill of necessities and requisites to carry out the kind of foreign policy that might be necessary. Instead, they

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Does the United States have within its political, social, and economic resources the capacity to control the behavior of 150 nations?

invent a variety of middling solutions, which are illusions, at best surrogates for the real problem. In fact, these demi-remedies and these pseudosolutions are so legion, they're so much abroad in the American press these days (particularly in liberal circles, but to some extent in conservative ones as well), that sometimes they seem to be buzzing around like a plague of medflies.

These middling arguments that have preempted the attention of most of the American press include selectivity of commitment and response, as if we can defend here but not there, and the Russians are too stupid to see that. Deterrence, another argument, is overemphasized. It has become a panacea, as if by the manipulation of other people's perceptions of our defense, we can substitute illusion for reality, and escape the high cost of providing the real sinews of defense. As if we can simply brandish a few symbols of resolve, such as the reinstitution of conscription, or the gross aggregate or percentage of increase of the defense budget—taken not as a set of expenditures but as a symbol of rearmament and the *will* of this country. Those are the kinds of panaceas or middling arguments that are being put forward these days precisely in order to avoid the essential incompatability of the world and its problems with the restraints and the limits of the American social, political, and economic system.

All of these proponents of selectivity, or of the manipulation of perceptions, would still hope to contain our adversaries in the world. And they all seem to impute to others the absurd character of extremism: the claim that others are ideologues, and would reinstitute some kind of far-reaching scheme that is beyond the nation's capabilities. Many of my colleagues in the academic world are putting out theses like this—Robert Tucker is a recent notable example. He calls for "*moderate*" containment, *limited* containment, and has predictably received the plaudits of *The New York Times,* and other sage and sober organs of opinion.

But the whole point is, when you analyze what *moderate* means, that qualifying adjective pales into insignificance; it fades away. Because the objects that Professor Tucker and others would defend in the world are exactly the same schedule of objects of the foreign and military policy of the Reagan administration, and of the more extreme hawks that they castigate. The only difference is the interposition of the word *moderate.* We must beware of claims of *moderate* containment and *selective* intervention, because the terms in themselves contain no tangible instructions for how to carry out our defense with fewer resources. Thus, they have no content at all. We have to look for the operative clauses; that is, the kinds of conditions that they posit in the world, the kinds of threats, the kinds of objects of American commitment that would *trigger* an American response. And when we examine that list of threats and that list of commitments that these proponents of moderate containment put forward, we find that it's exactly the same list that everyone else has been constructing for the past 35 years.

George Kennan has been widely praised (even among libertarians, who tend to be grateful for even a shred of support for what appears to be a noninterventionist slant or tendency) for putting forward a thesis of selective intervention. But what are the objects, even of Kennan's superficially attractive proposal for selective intervention? They are the military defense of Western Europe; the military defense of the western Pacific, including notably and pivoting upon Japan; and, if subject to foreign attack, the military defense of Israel. Well, one might say, what else is left? The entire American force structure, when analyzed, is preempted by the defensive requirements of those three regions of the world. There isn't anything else. Other areas of the world world require zero *incremental* resources, in terms of force structure and dollars. And so this has to be realized: that the proponents of selective defense are not solving the problem either. But I hasten to say that, simply because it is being ignored by the middling and moderate liberal analysts, the problem itself is not fictitious. The problem is a *real* one: to reconcile in some way America's situation in the world and the kinds of resources and the kinds of public support that this country and this society might be willing to supply. That remains an abiding and a very difficult problem.

Now there is a handful of critics who seem to recognize this problem. Only in the last several months has even a glimmer of critical literature begun to appear to support the perceptions that some of us have had for at least a decade, by resuscitating the argument from solvency: whether American foreign policy is *solvent,* in the sense that an industrialist or a banker might consider his marketing strategy or his loan strategy to be solvent. Can we afford to do in the world what we are purporting to do?

However, the interesting thing about the solvency critics is that they still have not caught up with the fact that there are two roads to solvency, and they will not make a choice between them in their articles and in their critiques. One road is to generate and squeeze out of the American system in some way the resources that are necessary to implement that interventionist stance in the world. The other, of course, is to cut back the commitments of the United States to a level that is entirely consistent with the basic nature of this country's society. Those critics fail to confront that basic choice.

Now what's important about this is that the same choice is confronting the members of the Reagan administration. They are facing $60 billion deficits in 1982, and, by my reckoning, perhaps an $85 billion deficit in the year 1983. And they have finally just begun, in their private intramural discussions, to confront this horrendous prospect, although they have not yet decided what to do about it, because up until now they've wanted to do everything.

Their choices at this moment are all bad, and they consist of something to this effect: They could call for more taxes; that is, they could forestall that limited amount of tax relief that they have granted to the American people. Or they could inflate the money supply by borrowing from the banking system, which is a readymade, available remedy of governments that still have the mechanism to do that. Or they could go to the credit markets and compete with private borrowers, thereby crowding out industry and aborting the industrial recovery that they themselves have promoted and that the country so desperately needs. Or they could reduce domestic programs further; most of us would opt for that, of course, but that would go beyond their own

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conceptions of political reality, so they are not likely to do it. In the face of these alternatives, this administration is likely to have to cut into its previous estimates of defense budget increases. Even Stockman realizes at this point that they are going to have to confront the lively possibility of having to renege on their pledges to increase the defense budget in one large shot first and then perpetually thereafter by 7 percent a year. What we're likely to see is a series of subterfuges, a combination of all these bad remedies—never the ultimate remedy, which is a renunciation of the American posture of intervention and commitment to defend 100 countries on the face of the globe. That's the one thing that we will not see.

We will see a combination of superficial and apparent moves to trim here and there, to allow a little bit more inflation and a little bit less industrial recovery. A few more social programs may be thrown into the mill, but not an impressive amount. And there will be a slight cutback in the defense budget. If one asks what form that might take, I will predict that it will probably not take the form of a conspicuous elimination of any units—not any part of our 19 land divisions or 45 wings of tactical air, or surface naval forces. We're not likely to see any conspicuous cuts in those visible elements of our force structure. There will be a nibbling around the edges and an underfunding and understaffing of our units—and a stretchout in the procurement of certain weapons systems—things they hope will not be noticed. But, unfortunately, that will simply postpone the day of reckoning; it will not eliminate the basic contradiction that lies at the heart of this administration's perpetuation of the American paradigm of intervention—that is, deterrence and alliance.

Only through the substitution of a philosophy of nonintervention—which consists of the diametrical opposites of the present paradigm; that is, which consists of a national strategy of war avoidance, instead of deterrence, and a program of self-reliance for other nations, instead of alliance and the provision of military defense by the United States—only in the provision of that kind of radical alternative to the present paradigm is this country going to be able to make ends meet, and to acquire a defensive posture that is consistent with the type of economy and the type of society we would like to achieve.

I would like to comment on just one or two points that were raised by Congressman Paul. I too would reject for forensic purposes the label *isolationism,* even though it has a very honorable history in the experience of the United States. I agree thoroughly that *we* are the people who are insisting that there be a breakdown of international frontiers, because we don't believe in the prerogatives of the nation. That's the basic point. And therefore, that people and goods should cross borders freely. I would add another term, of course: that capital should also be free to cross borders without restriction, because in many essential senses the first two become meaningless if capital is controlled, regimented, and barred. Of course, that is what distinguishes the anti-war leftists from the anti-war libertarians, a very important distinction that can never be fudged.

On that same point, who are the people that are promoting American interventionism throughout the world? They are—and I think this suggest a basic split on the issue of foreign policy—the neomercantilists. They are the people who captured the decision-making, policy-making apparatus of both parties and believe that they have a right to exert the full powers of government, to invoke the resources and the efforts of peoples, to gain power—as calculated in some integers and some indices of *national* power. Of course, that game has been going on at least since the days of Tudor governments in England in the sixteenth century.

It was precisely *against* that kind of neomercantilism abroad, coupled with state planning and monopoly at home, that the libertarian thinkers, starting with Adam Smith, inveighed.

Unfortunately, the neomercantilist philosophy is gaining great influence in this country through the machinations and the incessant writings of people such as Felix Rohatyn of New York, virtually serialized in heretofore liberal publications such as *The New York Review of Books,* which is influential beyond its apparent circulation. That is a very serious threat. The competitive free market model must be redefined and made clearer as a major alternative to this kind of neomercantilism and planning that is capturing the fancy and imagination of so many people.

Congressman Paul proposed a coherent nuclear policy which is based mostly on the erection of a defensive network centering on antiballistic missiles. It's on that score that I'm a bit skeptical. Reading the technical literature, as, of course, Congressman Paul has, one can arrive at different conclusions. I read it more pessimistically than he does. I tend to derive the conclusion that it would take an inordinately large expenditure to defend American society, even more than it would take to defend American weapons systems—a very clear distinction has to be made here—against incoming Soviet missiles. I would put the expense of developing an umbrella of antiballistic missiles (and the associated shelters and all the other unpleasant things that require the regimentation and imposition of the state) over a decade at something like $500 billion.

So I would say that is priced out of our reach already. It entails other kinds of sacrifices that the American people might not be willing to make in their life patterns and the location of their industry and their freedom of movement. I would say we should concentrate on defining a counter-*military* deterrent stance, such that the only objects that we would target explicitly would be Soviet military forces. And by that I do not mean, in the first instance, silos and missiles, because that would be the single thing that would be most likely to trigger an essentially unwanted first strike in the event of an international crisis. Rather, I mean that list of some 3,000 military installations in the Soviet Union that are not nuclear silos. Such a stance would be distinctly second-strike. I think that we should abjure unilaterally the first use of nuclear weapons. We can do that, coupled with an adjustment in our targeting policy, and coupled with a severe cutback in our nuclear posture itself—a concentration on seabased weapons and an elimination of our land based weapons (which are vulnerable and provocative under all circumstances). That is a nuclear program that would be worth considering as an interim set of measures.

It is just possible that, at best, we would never get beyond interim measures. So they should be very carefully constructed so that each one of them makes moral and strategic sense on its own terms. Because that is our way of at least establishing the stability of the nuclear balance, upon which our lives and our fortunes hang, while we await more favorable developments in the domestic and international systems that might lead to the total abolition of nuclear weapons. ❑

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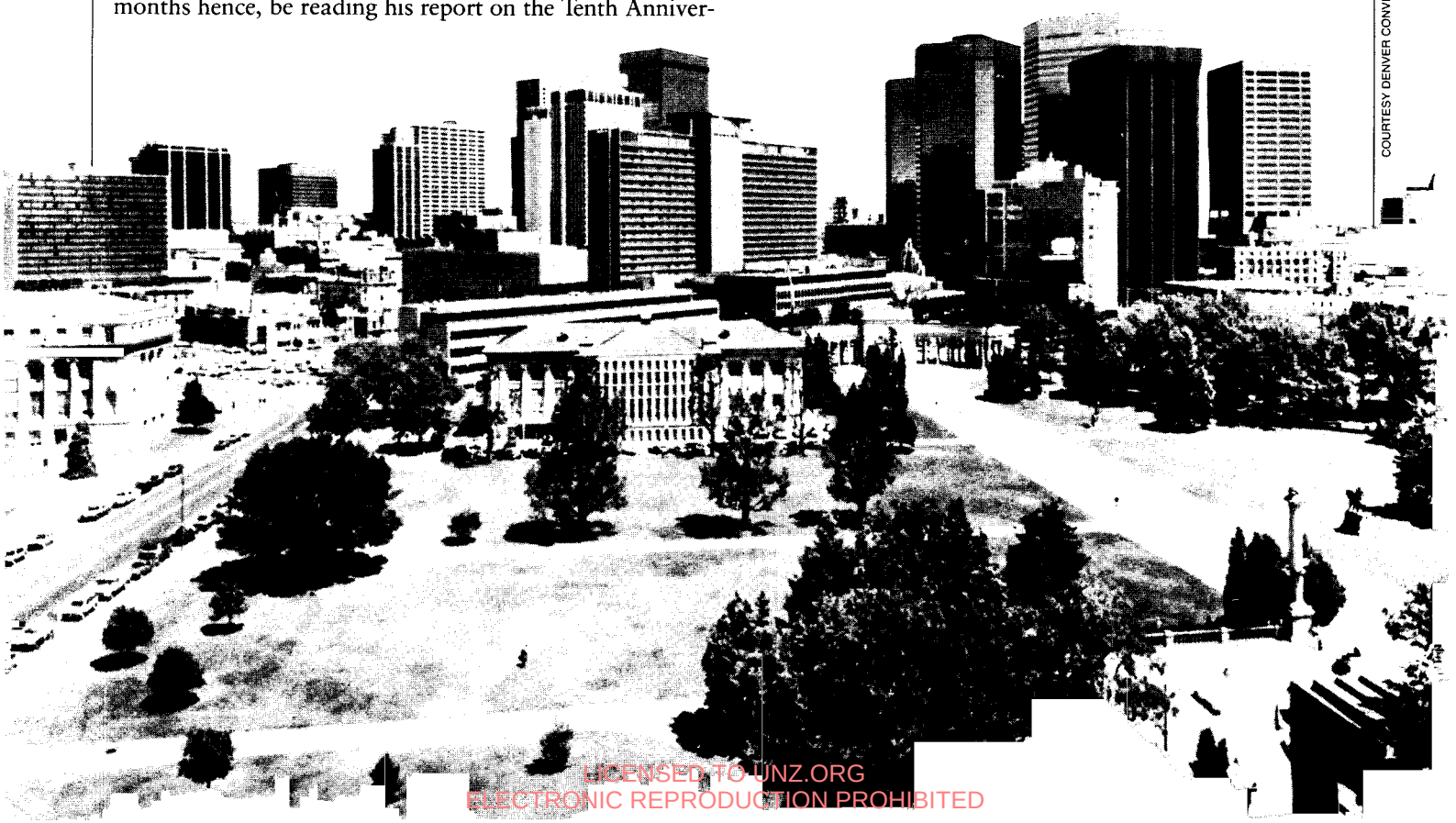
LP/10 Considered as a Work of Art

JEFF RIGGENBACH

I. In which the critic suffers cold feet

"The Average Citizen," Albert Guérard wrote nearly half a century ago in his book *Art for Art's Sake* (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1936), "would be greatly offended if he were told that his political allegiance is in the least affected by anything so frivolous as art.... Beauty in the political field seems to him irrelevant, incongruous, alien, antagonistic." And so it would be too, the critic found himself worrying as he watched the decaying mansions of Denver's once elegant Capitol Hill section glide past the windows of his Yellow Checker Cab, with the libertarians who would, a couple of months hence, be reading his report on the Tenth Anniversary National Convention of the Libertarian Party.

It was true on the one hand, the critic reflected, that libertarians were great patrons of the arts; in particular, they were great readers of novels. It was notorious that the majority of the founders of the Libertarian Party in 1971 had first been brought to libertarianism by a novel called *Atlas Shrugged,* the magnum opus of a Russian emigré philosopher and polemicist named Ayn Rand; and it was further notorious that after ten years of steady growth the Party remained Randian to a remarkable extent in its ideological underpinnings. The critic was not a betting man, but he would have put money on the proposition that if you asked



COURTESY DENVER CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

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every member of the Party what author had most influenced the development of his or her own political thinking, the answer in at least a simple majority of all cases would still be Ayn Rand.

On the other hand, the critic's worries about his upcoming LP/10 performance were not entirely without rational foundation. There was likely to be some question in some people's minds as to his qualifications for covering LP/10. For though he had written in libertarian publications for nearly ten years, on subjects as diverse as nuclear power, broadcast deregulation, marijuana, education, Social Security, and the forces which led to the disestablishment of the Shah of Iran, still he was thought of by the readers of such publications as first and foremost a literary critic, a reviewer of books, and a commentator on broadly cultural matters; he was thought of only secondarily, if at all, as a political journalist. And the critic wasn't sure this view of his career was erroneous; on the whole, though it did tend to neglect his twelve years in radio news as a writer, anchorman, feature reporter, and documentary producer, he felt it was close enough to the truth. The problem it raised was a pragmatic one, one which had to do with the common stereotypes which dominated most people's thinking about critics and reviewers and how they differed from the other sorts of writers one encountered in daily newspapers and in magazines.

Wilfrid Sheed, the distinguished novelist, critic, and sometime convention reporter (the critic had long been a fan of "Chicago on My Mind" and "Miami: 1972" in Sheed's 1978 essay collection *The Good Word,* published by E.P. Dutton), had put his finger on the problem when he recounted a remark made to him at the 1972 Democratic convention by "an old friend, William V. Shannon, the political writer. Bill fixed me with a friendly glower and said, 'Why aren't you home reviewing books?'" Critics, in the common conception of things, are either self-important peddlers of opinions which, in the end, are no better than anybody else's; or else they are experts of a kind, but of a remarkably useless kind — experts in the interpretation of symbols. And experts in the interpretation of symbols have about the same status among their fellow reporters in the average newsroom — and, for that matter, among the majority of readers of newspapers and magazines — as interpreters of tea leaves.

The critic had thought to overcome this prejudice by enlisting in his support that greatest of American journalists, H. L. Mencken. For Mencken was a writer with clout among libertarians. And Mencken, who had devoted nearly a third of his nearly five million published words to theatre criticism and book reviewing and who had often described himself in his later career as a "critic of ideas," had also argued most persuasively that the business of a book or theatre critic is indistinguishable from the business of any other reporter. "The primary aim of all of them," he had written in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1914, "was to please the crowd, to give a good show. . . ." And to the extent that a reporter aspired to Higher Things, Mencken had argued further, to the extent that he wanted his work to endure longer than a day before being used to wrap fish or line a birdcage, to the extent that he took himself seriously as a writer — to that extent he was aiming to produce not mere entertainment, but that sort of enduring entertainment that so transcends the periodic fluctuations in the fashion of taste that it comes to be called "art."

"The motive of the critic who is really worth reading," Mencken wrote in 1921, "is not the motive of the pedagogue, but the motive of the artist." And wasn't it commonly acknowledged that all the most inspired convention reporting in the entire history of American journalism had been turned out by critics functioning as creative artists? By Mencken himself in the '20s, '30s, and '40s, by Norman Mailer in the '60s, and by Doctor Hunter S. Thompson in the '70s?

But that fact, for all that it clinched the critic's argument on why a critic was a suitable candidate to cover a political convention, was another problem in its own right. The critic himself was a reporter who aspired to Higher Things. But how could he hope to achieve Higher Things when achieving them meant competing on equal turf with Mencken's "The Wallace Paranoia," Mailer's *Miami and the Siege of Chicago,* and Dr. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72?* How could the critic transcend the birdcage, the fishmarket, and the inherent limits of his genre — convention reporting — when doing so involved matching Dr. Thompson for fearless candor and sheer readability; Norman Mailer for that sense of the unintendedly but powerfully, naturally symbolic in real life which we usually call the "novelistic sense" (except that it is evident in Mailer's convention writings as it has never been evident in any of his novels); and the Sage of Baltimore for sheer artistic greatness?

Candor the critic figured he could probably manage: he'd often been faulted for lacking tact. Maybe he could even manage readability. But novelistic sense? From the very first step, the task of setting the scene, the critic was left behind at the starting gate in an ignominious cloud of dust. "For ten miles," Mailer had written in the opening pages of *Miami and the Siege of Chicago,* "from the Diplomat to the Di Lido, above Hallandale Beach Boulevard down to Lincoln Mall, all the white refrigerators stood, piles of white refrigerators six and eight and twelve stories high, twenty stories high, shaped like sugar cubes and ice-cube trays on edge, like mosques and palaces, shaped like matched white luggage and portable radios, stereos, plastic compacts and plastic rings, Moorish castles shaped like waffle irons, shaped like the baffle plates on white plastic electric heaters, and cylinders like Waring blenders, buildings looking like giant op art and pop art paintings, and sweet wedding cakes, cottons of kitsch and piles of dirty cotton stucco . . . all oases for technological man. Deep air conditioning down to 68 degrees, ice-palaces to chill the fevered brain — when the air conditioning worked." And it had to work. For, as Mailer had already reminded his readers, Miami Beach "was, on any and every day of the Republican Convention of 1968, one of the hottest cities in the world."

How could the critic hope to live up to such a touchstone, such a benchmark, such a standard of performance? And if he didn't, how could he hope to get away with certain of the borrowings he planned to commit in his own convention report? — most notably his borrowings of Mailer's device of writing himself into his own report in the third person? (There would be a difference, of course. Where Mailer had written of himself as "the reporter," the critic would write of himself as "the critic.")

But if he couldn't live up to Mailer's standard of scene setting, the critic found himself thinking as his cab pulled up at the door of the Denver Hilton, might it not be as much the fault of the city of Denver as his own fault for some lack of novelistic sense? The critic was always eager to locate blame outside himself, especially for his own failures; and he had developed a rare facility to complement his eagerness. Still,

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it must be said in his defense that *some* of the blame for his predicament *might* have belonged to the city of Denver itself. Try as you might, you couldn't get away from the fact that Denver lacked character. In almost every way it was the urban equivalent of Ayn Rand's Mr. Thompson, "who possessed the quality of never being noticed. In any group of three his person became indistinguishable, and when seen alone it seemed to evoke a group of its own, composed of the countless persons he resembled."

Similarly, the critic reflected, as he followed the Hilton bellman to his room on the fifth floor, the city of Denver always seemed to evoke a group of *its* own, whenever it was studied closely—a group composed of all the other cities it resembled, like Chicago, and Houston, and Detroit, and San Francisco, and Los Angeles. The last two of these, he decided, were the most meaningful: Denver could probably best be described as San Francisco become Los Angeles.

Like San Francisco, Denver had been established as a gold rush town — the place where you got your maps and supplies and equipment before heading into the mountains. Like San Francisco, Denver had grown quickly into a charming city of picturesque nineteenth century buildings. Like San Francisco, it boasted—and boasts—a year-round mild climate. But in the last fifty years, Denver had turned away from the San Francisco model and toward the Los Angeles model. Unlike San Francisco, but like Los Angeles, Denver had had an almost infinite amount of space available for future growth—and so it had grown horizontally, like Los Angeles, in the fashion which had come to be known as "urban sprawl." Unlike San Francisco, but like Los Angeles, Denver had therefore turned to the private car as the most efficient means of solving the inevitable urban transportation problems brought on by its inexorable expansion. And unlike San Francisco, but like Los Angeles, Denver had therefore come to be plagued with one of the worst smog problems in the nation.

Nor was this all. Unlike San Francisco, but like Los Angeles, Denver had always had a large Latino community. Unlike San Francisco, but like Los Angeles, Denver had knocked down most of its nineteenth century buildings, or allowed them to fall down, and had replaced them with more recent construction. One of Denver's two daily papers, the *Denver Post,* was owned and operated by the *Los Angeles Times.* The restaurants in downtown Denver's Larimer Square were branch locations of California chains like Josephina's and The Magic Pan. Even the bar in the Hilton, with its wicker furniture and its wilderness of potted plants, had an unmistakably California atmosphere to it.

This transformation of Denver into the easternmost outpost of Southern California had not escaped the attention of the residents of Colorado. The critic had already run into expressions of extreme distaste—on bumperstickers, bathroom walls, and the walls of public telephone booths—for the "Californication" of the Centennial State. But actually, he thought, there's nothing new about it at all. The Los Angeles-ification of Denver began decades ago. And the San Francisco connection had been there in the very beginning. The city of Denver was named, in fact, for James William Denver, a soldier, lawyer, politician, Indian agent, and territorial governor (of the Kansas territory during 1857 and 1858, when that territory included Denver and much of the rest of what is now Colorado) who had come to the area from San Francisco, where he had served as a California state senator, as secretary of state for California, and as a

Denver, Colorado, birthplace of the Libertarian Party. (Inset) The Denver Hilton, where the Party's Tenth Anniversary Convention was held.

COURTESY DENVER HILTON

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Democratic representative of the state of California in the U.S. Congress. Californication got under way a long time ago in Colorado.

This was, in fact, one of the reasons Denver seemed to the critic to be such an ideal setting for the Tenth Anniversary National Convention of the Libertarian Party. After all, California had long been the geographic center of the entire libertarian movement: the Party had its national headquarters there in the early '70s, and still had three times as many members there as it had in any other single state. Moreover, two of its three presidential candidates to date had come from California. The oldest of the various libertarian magazines, *Reason,* and its parent institution, the Reason Foundation, were both located in California, as were the principal periodicals and institutions of the mainly Southern California-centered anti-Party libertarians, who opposed political action on principle. For most of the past five years, another group of libertarian institutions — the Cato Institute, *The Libertarian Review,* Students for a Libertarian Society, and the Institute for Humane Studies — had been headquartered in the San Francisco Bay area. What better site for a Tenth Anniversary Convention, then, the critic thought, than the easternmost outpost of California?

II. In which the critic rehearses LP history

More to the point, of course, the Libertarian Party had been founded in Denver ten years before — and not by a Californian, but by a Coloradan named Dave Nolan who had given a lot of thought to one of H. L. Mencken's lesser known political proposals which he, Nolan, had found in the back of a well-thumbed copy of the Sage of Baltimore's *Notes on Democracy.* Mencken, as all the world knows, was no admirer of democracy, and his reasons for holding it in disesteem were legion. One among them, however, seemed to hold a special place in his conception of things, for he returned to it again and again in book after book. As he formulated it in his last book, *Minority Report* (Knopf, 1956), the objection ran thusly: "The main thing that every political campaign in the United States demonstrates is that the politicians of all parties, despite their superficial enmities are really members of one great brotherhood. Their principal, and indeed their sole, object is to collar public office, with all the privileges and profits that go therewith. They achieve this collaring by buying votes with other people's money. . . . Under democracy one party always devotes its chief energies to trying to prove that the other party is unfit to rule — and both commonly succeed, and are right. . . . [U.S.] history is simply a record of vacillations between two gangs of frauds."

But on one occasion, thirty years before, in the closing pages of *Notes on Democracy* (Knopf, 1926), Mencken had seen a way out of this impasse. "It is a pity that this is so," he had written. "For what democracy needs most of all is a party that will separate the good that is in it theoretically from the evils that beset it practically, and then try to erect that good into a workable system. What it needs beyond everything is a party of liberty. It produces, true enough, occasional libertarians, just as despotism produces occasional regicides, but it treats them in the same drum-head way. It will never have a party of them until. . . ."

But by this time Nolan's head was teeming with ideas touched off by what he'd been reading. And so it was, in August of 1971, a little more than fifteen years after the Sage of Baltimore had died in his sleep in his bedroom in the famous house on Hollins Street, that Dave Nolan the Denver adman and Mencken enthusiast got together with a handful of politically likeminded friends in the living room of his home and founded the Libertarian Party.

That the deed should have been done in a living room had always seemed neatly symbolic to the critic. For the living room had a long and venerable history in the libertarian movement. In the late 1950s, the movement had been headquartered, for all practical purposes, in the living room of Ayn Rand's New York apartment. In the 1960s, it had shifted its base of operations uptown to the living room of Murray Rothbard's apartment on West 88th Street, and had begun taking summer vacations in the imposing hexagonal living room of Robert Le Fevre's log cabin home on the campus of the Freedom School (later Rampart College) in rural Larkspur, Colorado.

Schools had also figured long and importantly in the development of the libertarian movement, the critic reflected — and not infrequently the schools had grown out of the living rooms. The Nathaniel Branden Institute of the 1960s had grown out of Ayn Rand's living room, and LeFevre's Freedom School had grown out of his. Other schools had figured in the history of the movement, of course, including a number which had had nothing to do with living rooms: New York University, for example, where for two decades the great economist and social theorist Ludwig von Mises had held his famous seminars in economic history; and the University of Chicago during the years of Friedrich Hayek's residency, which saw establishment of one of the earliest and most important of the genuinely libertarian periodicals of the postwar period, the *New Individualist Review.*

Of all these schools, however, the only one which had been explicitly libertarian in its doctrine and the only one which had devoted itself entirely to matters of political economy in its curriculum was Robert LeFevre's Freedom School, located, appropriately enough, in Colorado. For what place could possibly be so appropriate as Colorado, the critic wondered as he looked out the windows of his hotel room across Denver to the mountains, as a birthplace for a libertarian movement? California perhaps, for reasons he had already reflected upon at some length. But where in America is the largest and most magnificent of all monuments to the memory of Will Rogers, who said that "the more you read and observe about this Politics thing, you got to admit that each party is worse than the other"? In Colorado. Where did Ayn Rand locate the libertarian utopia of Galt's Gulch in *Atlas Shrugged?* In Colorado. What state has come to be known as the Centennial State by virtue of having been admitted to the union on the 100th anniversary of the libertarian revolution which won American independence from the British government? Colorado.

Had not John Milton 300 years before called Liberty a "mountain nymph"? And what did Colorado signify to most Americans but mountains? Rocky Mountain High. The cool, clear, clean mountain air. The wilderness. Survival. Self-reliance. Rugged individualism. The freedom of the wide open spaces. Dr. Thompson running for Sheriff in Aspen on the Freak Power ticket. The Aspen Institute and the Me Generation. Self Fulfillment. The mountain ski resorts where the piles of snow lay as high on the mirrors inside by the fire as on the slopes outside the lodge's walls. Colorado the land of doing one's own thing.

Of course, not all of Colorado is mountainous. The Eastern half of the state, the half which begins at Denver and

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stretches thereafter in unbroken monotony toward Kansas, Missouri, and the great Mississippi River, is not mountainous at all, but *plain,* in the sense now decreed *Archaic* by the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language,* in the sense meaning flat, level, having no visible elevation or depression. Denver is the Mile High City not because it is a mountain city, but because it stands on a flat, unbroken mile high plain, the High Plains of the legends of the Wild West—a body of legendry with its own unmistakable tradition of individualism, self-sufficiency, and hostility to government built into its very warp and woof.

III. In which the critic reviews the convention

Such, at any rate, were the critic's reflections as he unpacked his bags and settled into his hotel room for five days at 5,280 feet. If his reflections seem to have been preoccupied to an extraordinary extent with symbolic matters, this may be attributed easily enough to the critic's being the sort of writer he is—in short, to the fact of his being a critic. And if they seem to have occupied his (and the reader's) thoughts for an unduly long time, given the nature of his assignment, let it be said in his defense merely that such a judgment might easily prove to have been premature. As any of his longtime readers will gladly tell you, it is not the critic's way in his longer articles to come swiftly and directly to the point; yet, once he has, at long last, come round to the point in his own seemingly circuitous and digressive and thoroughly disorderly way, even his most apparently outrageous digressions from the subject at hand often turn out to have been relevant after all — and not infrequently in unexpected ways.

In the case of LP/10, how could the relevance of all this talk of symbolism be anything other than obvious? When had so overtly and forthrightly and heavyhandedly symbolic an event been staged anywhere in North America in living memory? There was the symbolic significance of the tenth anniversary the conventioneers had been called to celebrate. There was the symbolic significance of Colorado and of Denver. And there was the symbolic significance of Californication, a significance which seemed to be eerily echoed in the personalities around which the internal politics of the Tenth Anniversary Convention would come to be centered. There was the Coloradan, Dave Nolan, Founder of the Party and now symbolic central figure in one of its two major factions, the Coalition for a Party of Principle, whose purpose in Denver in August of 1981 was to wrest control of the Party away from the dominant rival faction, the Crane Machine, which was embodied in the figures of Ed Crane and Chris Hocker, both natives of Los Angeles and longtime residents of San Francisco. After Nolan had founded the Party and established its national office in Denver, he had passed the title of National Chair on to Crane, who had moved the national office to San Francisco and never moved it back. When he had moved it again it had been to Washington, where it had stayed ever since. But many in the Party would have said that the real reins of control remained ever after in San Francisco, where Ed Crane lived between presidential campaigns. He moved to Washington to manage the MacBride campaign in 1976, and again to manage the Clark campaign in 1980, but the rest of the time he lived in San Francisco; and it was from San Francisco that he oversaw the largest fiefdom ever overseen by any one libertarian anywhere—an interlocking group of institutions, publications, and organizations.

Crane was president of the Cato Institute, which published *Inquiry* magazine, *Policy Report,* the *Cato Journal,* and various books, monographs, and pamphlet-length policy analyses, in addition to hosting various scholarly seminars and conferences on college campuses all over the United States, and producing a nationally syndicated political commentary program called "Byline," which was heard Monday through Friday by more than 2 million Americans on over 150 radio stations coast to coast, including major cities like New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Crane was a past president and ongoing corporate director of Libertarian Review, Inc., publisher of the largest explicitly libertarian national publication, *The Libertarian Review,* and also of *Update,* one of the movement's two monthly newsletters. There were some who said that he was also calling all or most of the shots for the Libertarian Party from his headquarters four blocks from the San Francisco waterfront. More important, those who said this also characterized themselves as out to stop it.

And to the extent that Dave Nolan of Colorado was perceived as the symbolic central figure in the movement to stop Crane's dominance of the Party, it was impossible, the critic decided, to avoid thinking of the struggle within the Party in terms of the Colorado revolt against Californication. Those who allied themselves with Nolan and the Coalition for a Party of Principle (CPP) were like the Coloradans who wanted to reclaim the purity of their state from the pollution of Californication. The CPP wanted to wrest control of the party back from the Californian Crane and his fellow Californians Hocker and Clark, who had polluted its purity of principle and led its last presidential campaign down the sellout road to certain extinction. So, at any rate, the more hard-core among the CPP forces conceived their struggle.

Looked at from the perspective of the Crane Machine, the situation was very different indeed. The function of the Crane Machine, as perceived from inside the machine, was not to Californicate or pollute anything, but to bring it into the Real World, to keep it out of the hands of the Zanies and Lunatic Fringies who wanted to keep it small and ineffectual so it could continue to serve them as a haven from which they could harangue the rest of the world for not sitting up and recognizing the Truth as They (the Fringies and Zanies) Had Defined It. The Crane Machine opposed itself to the "swarms of crackpots of all sorts" which Mencken had complained were "naturally attracted" by the Progressive Party convention in Philadelphia in 1948, and which were also attracted, though in smaller numbers than ever before by a Libertarian Party national convention, to Denver in August of 1981.

It was, in fact, one of the laudable achievements of the Crane Machine's years in power, looked at from the perspective of those manning the Machine, that it had managed to purge the Party so successfully of such flakes *without ever conducting anything which could legitimately be called a purge,* without ever seeking to eject any elements from the Party, without ever seeking to read anyone or any faction officially out of the movement. No. It had been done entirely by good example, by letting the people in the Party who were serious about achieving liberty see what could be done in the real world of politics by competent people who were libertarians and who were willing to stop bickering about some kind of abstract purity and try to figure out the hard practical questions of how to turn our ideology of individual freedom into a political program you could sell to the media

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Alicia Garcia Clark, the first woman ever to be elected as the Libertarian Party's National Chair.

and to the American public. Looked at from within the Crane Machine, there was nothing Machiavellian about the Machine, there was nothing even machinelike about it. It was not true, as the CPP forces claimed, that Boss Crane surrounded himself with "supporters, hirelings, and toadies" who were selected for their obsequious devotion to the Boss, rather than for any talents they might have objectively been able to bring to bear on libertarian electoral prospects. Ed Crane's associates saw themselves as choosing to work for the Boss because of their honest belief in his professionalism—which was not the same thing, any one of them would tell you, as believing that he never made any mistakes. They worked for Boss Crane because they wanted to see the Party and the movement *succeed*, and in the Real World, not just in a bunch of intellectuals' living rooms. The Crane Machine forces had a name for the CPP: the Coalition for a Tiny and Ineffectual Party. The choice, they insisted, was between the Lunatic Fringe and the Real World.

The choice, the critic could see at the outset, was purely symbolic. He satisfied himself of this by spending some time during the convention with a selection of both chiefs and Indians from both sides of the factional fence. Fifteen minutes' conversation with Ed Crane in the Hilton lobby on Saturday morning was sufficient to prove that Crane was not the J. R. Ewing of the libertarian movement, the ruthless autocrat depicted in the more hard-core CPP literature. And fifteen minutes' conversation with Dave Nolan in the same lobby later that afternoon was sufficient to prove that Nolan was not the suicidally impractical reactionary you often heard cussed and discussed among Boss Crane's supporters, hirelings, and toadies. If you insisted on sticking to the facts of the matter, you had to conclude that all the issues which separated the Crane Machine and the CPP were matters of emphasis: whether this plan or that was the best way to make political hay out of the immediate political situation, whether this transition demand or that was the best way to achieve a short term reduction of government power over the individual while keeping one's eyes permanently on the goal of complete individual freedom.

But hardly anybody at the tenth anniversary convention in Denver wanted to stick to the facts. Maybe it was the heavy, seemingly pregnant symbolism of the place and the anniversary. Maybe it was the thin air, notorious both for clearing the head and for serving as a breeding ground for lofty, sweeping abstractions. Whatever it was, it kept the conventioneers' focus firmly on the symbolic, on the contest between the Autocratic, Opportunistic Crane Machine and the Principled, Decentralist Coalition for a Party of Principle — or, if you were coming from the other direction, the contest between the Competent, Professional, Real World-oriented Crane Machine and the Coalition for a Tiny and Ineffectual Party. And whichever side of the symbolic divide you fell on, that determined your candidate in the race for National Chair, the main order of business to be transacted at LP/10.

The CPP candidate was John Mason, the Big Bearded, Big Chested, Thick Sinewed Mountain Man who came striding down out of the Rockies and the Big Sky Country, from the Loftiest Heights of Philosophical Purity, with His Message of Commitment to Principle. The Crane Machine candidate was Kent Guida (pronounced GUIDE-uh), the Terse, Soft-spoken, Wiry Young Businessman who Made his Living Undertaking the Impossible, Putting Up Buildings and Bridges and Platforms and other Structures in Places Where the Odds were Against It, like out in the Ocean; the Competent Man in an almost Heinleinian or Randian Sense, Who Would Move the Party Forward into the Real World, Whatever the Obstacles in its Path.

And which of these contestants won the prize? Neither. It went to a third candidate, a candidate who entered the convention a poor third to the other two, and then had to overcome a considerable and influential body of opinion among the arriving delegates as to the irrelevance of her candidacy. For when Alicia Clark announced her desire to serve as National Chair of the Libertarian Party in the Spring of 1981, she had couched the announcement not in symbolic but in literal terms: she would be an effective National Chair because of her business management experience and her nationwide experience working with local LP activists during the Clark campaign of 1980. To her credit, however, she perceived quickly enough that the campaign was not being conducted on that sort of literal level this year, and by the time of the Denver convention she had switched to an explicitly symbolic strategy. A vote for Alicia Clark, she told the delegates at the Denver Hilton, was a vote for reconciliation, compromise, and placing the emphasis on all the things libertarians had in common, instead of on all the trivial things they had to argue about. A vote for Alicia Clark was a vote against factionalism, she asserted—a vote against both Mountain Men, with their Lofty Heights of Purity, and Competent Men, with their Real World(s). A vote for Alicia Clark was a vote that libertarians stop bickering and start working together.

Alicia Clark was not the only one talking in these terms to the delegates either, and this fact was one of the secrets of her success. For one of her most avid and tireless supporters was her husband Ed Clark, the 1980 LP presidential nominee who had polled nearly a million votes in his race the previous November against Jimmy Carter, John Anderson, and a former second-rate movie actor who had also worked as a

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third-rate TV personality and a fourth-rate Governor. Ed Clark was one of the most popular men in the LP, especially at the Denver convention, where it was generally conceded that up to a third of the delegates were newcomers, people who had come into the Party during and through the Clark campaign. Ed's vigorous efforts on his wife's behalf were therefore very influential.

But they weren't influential in exactly the same way for everyone who was exposed to them. Ed Clark's popularity in the Party was not universal. Indeed, one of the largest symbolic issues which divided the convention was the issue of whether the Clark campaign had sold out libertarian principle in a vain effort to win the approval of the Eastern media establishment and siphon off some of the support then fueling the presidential campaign of John Anderson. The more virulent of John Mason's supporters opposed the Crane Machine precisely because it had been the Crane Machine which had run the Clark campaign—and, therefore, it was the Crane Machine which was guilty of selling out libertarian principle, *with Clark's complicity.*

To such folks as these, of course, Ed Clark's efforts to promote his wife as a Conciliatory Compromise Candidate could only come as a kind of vain crying in the wilderness, and, as such could only fall upon deaf ears. But most of the delegates felt otherwise. They voted for Alicia Clark for National Chair not only because they liked her symbolic role as peacemaker and conciliator, the woman who could end the bickering and get us working together, but also because they *didn't* regard the Clark campaign as any kind of disaster and they therefore didn't view Ed Clark as either a Sinister Agent of Enemy Forces, or, alternately, an Unthinking Dupe of the Crane Machine. So when Ed Clark came to them with his pitch for Alicia, they bought it. They *were* tired of the faction fighting. They *did* want to stop bickering and start working together. They *did* regard the Clark campaign as, on balance, a success for the Party and the Movement. They *did* have a lot of respect for Ed Clark. And they gave him the support he asked for.

To be sure, there was more to Alicia Clark's victory than merely her husband's campaign assistance and her own work to promote herself as the Great Conciliator, the Henrietta Clay of the libertarian movement. There was also the fact that she was a woman and a member of an important ethnic minority, the growing Latino minority—which was a fact full of symbolic significance in its own right. The Tenth Anniversary Convention included more women and minorities as a percentage of the total attendance than any previous national LP convention in history, and this only helped Alicia Clark's campaign—helped it perhaps as much as the assistance of her husband Ed.

IV. In which the critic discourses on political symbolism

By the time the race for National Chair had been decided, the critic found he had lost much of the fear of mistrust and disacceptance which had troubled him on his way into the Mile High City. Why *should* his fellow libertarians refuse to accept a critic's interpretation of the Denver convention? Why *should* they think a critic unsuited to the task of reporting it? The gathering was symbolic from top to bottom and from the word *go*—the symbolism of the National Chair's race was merely the culmination of something which had been present, even omnipresent, from the beginning. Outgoing National Chair Dave Bergland of California had formally opened the convention on Thursday the 27th of August with a keynote speech built around the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, with the libertarian movement as Orpheus, liberty as Eurydice, and the non-libertarians of real world politics as the monsters of the underworld. At the Tenth Anniversary Banquet on Saturday night, a huge papier-mâché Statue of Liberty had been wheeled into the room like a Trojan Horse while the delegates sang "Happy Birthday to Us" and blew out candles on 65 birthday cakes; then they had settled back to listen to a comedy routine based on the history of the LP, a routine in which Dave Nolan was presented as "a man who became a legend in his own mind" after he looked out on the world and saw that it was filled with Elephants and Asses and that his beloved nation was ruled by an Elephant who acted like an Ass. Shades of Orson Welles's "The Begatting of the President," the critic had thought. Shades of an overweeningly symbolic approach to the whole matter of politics.

The critic himself, in his inadequately celebrated Sunday morning talk on "The Clark Campaign Considered as a Work of Art," had laid considerable stress on the extent to which symbolic considerations dominated all of political life. "If we suggested," the critic had quoted from Albert Guérard, "that [the Average Citizen] ... elected Mr. Coolidge for esthetic reasons, he would not even smile at our flippancy." Yet why else *would* the American people have elected Calvin Coolidge President—or, for that matter, the mediocrity who now occupies the White House and quite rightly thinks of himself as a latter-day Coolidge? Coolidge was the choice of the people because he was, as Guérard wrote, "the man of the hour. He was ideally suited for the part which was then in demand"—the part of "the Shrewd American, safe-and-sane, whose sole business is Business."

"There was no insincerity in him," Guérard had written, "any more than there was in Benjamin Franklin; still, we suspect that 'Cool Cal,' like Franklin, Lincoln and Roosevelt, was shrewd enough to play up to type. No man could possibly be as Coolidgian as President Coolidge; it is not in human nature. His impersonation of silent, conservative America, although slightly overdone, was a masterpiece of folk art, which well deserved its *Encore.*"

Nor was Coolidge our only President as Work of Art. Guérard mentions Teddy Roosevelt, the Grinning, Big Game Hunting, Rough Riding, Soft Speaking, Big Stick Carrying Hero of our national folklore, "a combination of George Washington and Buffalo Bill, the ideal Boy Scout for all generations." He also mentions Abe Lincoln the Great Emancipator and Rail Splitter. One might go on to name John Kennedy of Camelot, Ronald Reagan the Tight Fisted Man on Horseback who Came to Bring the Freedom of the Wide Open Spaces of the West to all the rest of These States, and, of course, Richard Nixon the Personification of Total Evil who, according to R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., was voted "among the five most hated and feared men in history" for five consecutive years between 1970 and 1975 in "a poll conducted by Mme. Tussaud's Waxworks." In the last of these years, Tyrrell writes, "only Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada and the late Adolph Hitler surpassed him. Count Dracula tied him, and Jack the Ripper finished a poor fifth."

Nor is it only Presidents who take on this kind of symbolic significance; it's also candidates. In many ways the process of following an election campaign and supporting one of the candidates in it is a lot like the process of reading a novel and "identifying" with one of the characters—so that you "root"

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for that character when he's in trouble, sympathize with him when he's down, glory with him when he's up. For most voters, an election campaign is very much like a novel, a long, richly detailed story of the struggle among half a dozen prominent men for an especially desirable and prestigious and powerful executive position with the top company in its field. Who will win? You get a new installment every day, and you get to build up a judgment of each of the characters gradually as you see how each acts in scene after scene, chapter after chapter.

Nor is it only politicians who have this aesthetic dimension to them. It's also issues. A good example is the issue of the U.S. Defense budget. The biggest problem people run into when they try to convince other people of the necessity of cutting back the Pentagon is an aesthetic problem — by which I don't mean that American voters are admirers of the beauty of military parades, tanks, and MX missiles (though it may be that to some extent they are), but rather that American voters think about the Defense budget not in terms of what it really *is*, but in terms of what it stands for, what it symbolizes, what it *means*. And for most Americans the Defense budget means Strength, Valor, and Security. Never mind that at least half of it is spent in ways which could not possibly be construed as "defense." The politicians knew what they were doing when they renamed the old Department of War and created the Department of Defense. Almost everybody is against war, but almost everybody is *for* defense. And almost everybody thinks about political matters like war and defense in symbolic terms.

The word "everybody" in the last sentence, let it be emphasized, means *everybody* — libertarians included. Think about the libertarians who consider the Soviet Menace much more important than American Interventionism, because to them the United States is the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave, and is ludicrously miscast in a role such as Imperialist Warmonger. Think about the libertarians who are pro nuke, because to them nuclear power is symbolic of Science, Technology, Progress, Reason, the Mind, and Human Achievement. Think about the libertarians who regard the campaign as a failure, and base their case on Ed Clark's off-the-cuff remarks to reporters, rather than on any of the official publications of the campaign — even though they also persist in placing the blame for everything they feel went wrong with the campaign at the feet of the campaign management.

Doesn't such a methodology prove that these campaign critics are paying more attention to the symbolism of the campaign than to its substance? It it really necessary to point out that media appearances and interviews are not entirely in the control of campaign managers? That they depend on all sorts of factors that simply *can't* be planned — like how much sleep the candidate has had, when his plane arrived, what he ate when last he ate, whether his mind wandered during a question, and all kinds of other quirky things which are different for every individual? Is it really necessary, the critic wondered, to lecture libertarians of all people on the fact that everyone *is* an individual? That no individual can be expected to behave like a robot whose ideological program had been written by a committee of intellectuals?

Such questions would have been asked and answered by anyone who really proposed to conduct a dispassionate investigation of the campaign as a campaign. But they would not necessarily have been taken into account by anyone who proposed to look at the campaign as a work of art and write a piece of art criticism with it as subject. To the latter sort of person, the point of the campaign *is* the individual at its center, how he performs, how he reveals his character in scene after scene. In a campaign considered *qua* campaign, slips of the tongue and mistakes of judgment by the candidate are irrelevant to an assessment of the campaign management and strategy. In a campaign considered *qua* work of art, they can be all-important: they can, for example, reveal the candidate, wretch that he is, in his true colors—as an imperfect individual, rather than a John Galt.

Politics, the critic had decided by early Sunday afternoon, was symbolic from top to bottom and from the word go. And so he decided to accept an invitation graciously extended the day before by Scott Monahan of ABC-TV News in Denver to take a trip down to the rural Larkspur-Palmer Lake area between Denver and Colorado Springs, where Bob LeFevre's Freedom School had once flourished. A symbolic trip. A trip into the past.

The Freedom School had floundered more than ten years before, with symbolic rightness (but actual causal irrelevance) at almost the same time the other important educational institution of the early days of the libertarian movement, the Nathaniel Branden Institute of New York, had closed its doors. Both LeFevre and Nathaniel Branden had relocated in metropolitan Los Angeles by the early 1970s, and both had continued to operate by mail order for a time, but only as shades of their former selves. They differed in this, however: that while NBI had occupied a suite of offices in the basement of the Empire State Building — a suite which in itself reflected nothing of its libertarian past — the Freedom School had occupied its own buildings which had been constructed for the purpose on its own land, 526 wooded acres, by Bob LeFevre himself and a phalanx of committed volunteer libertarian labor. If it still stood, the critic decided, its fortunes since the '60s would be there for the 1981 visitor to see for himself. And they just might signify something for the future of the movement the Freedom School had helped to launch.

The school was still there, the critic found, all the buildings intact and well preserved save LeFevre's old house on the hill: there a recent fire had wreaked much destruction in the fabled living room. But it had obviously been contained, and restoration was in progress. The fire had been caused, the critic was told by one of the present-day inhabitants of what had once been the Freedom School, when a TV set had exploded.

The critic's informant was a garrulous young man of Latino ancestry whom the critic judged to be about 16. As they talked, standing outside the main door of what once had been (and was still, for the new owners had left all the original signs on the buildings) Rose Wilder Lane Hall, LeFevre's main dormitory and lecture facility, they gradually attracted listeners and curious onlookers—a group of half a dozen male teenagers.

"I noticed the sign out by the road said 'Griffith Institute,'" the critic told his informant. "And the man I talked to about whether it was okay to take a look around here told me the place is into 'juvenile rehabilitation' now. What is this place?"

The critic's informant laughed. "It's a lockup for juvenile delinquents, man. This is the government here. All these guys," he gestured around at the onlookers and inlisteners, "are a bunch of thieves and punks from Denver." There was general laughter. "Hey, man," the critic's informant said then, dropping his voice below the laughter, "you wanna

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The critic, his small son, and friends, visiting the site of Robert LeFevre's Freedom School.

give me a ride out of here?"

But at that point the front door of Rose Wilder Lane Hall opened, and the man who had told the critic and his party it was okay to look around for a few minutes and take a few pictures, "as long as you don't pass any drugs," emerged from the recreation room which once had been a lecture hall, ping-pong paddle in hand, to tell the boys, in effect, to move along, and to let the critic know in a friendly but unmistakably firm fashion that extended conversations with the inmates *weren't* okay. "Okay," the critic shrugged, and set off down the hill to his waiting car. As he walked, his informant rejoined him.

"Hey, man," he said, "I couldn't go with you anyway. They're gonna let me outa here in four months anyway. And you know what they do to you here if you try to run and they catch you?"

"No," the critic said, looking over his shoulder to see if the Warden was still on the porch of Rose Wilder Lane Hall. But he had gone back inside. "What do they do to you?"

"They bring you back and tie you to a tree and make you eat out of a dogbowl." The critic's informant laughed as though life were all a big joke.

"What're you in for, anyway?" the critic asked him.

His informant shrugged and laughed. "I guess I didn't know how to stay where I belonged, man. I didn't know how to stay home. I didn't know how to stay in school. Sometimes I didn't even know how to get to school in the first place. You know how it is."

The critic felt a sudden strong urge to smuggle the kid out of what once had been the Freedom School, and he started to tell the kid so but the kid interrupted him.

"Hey, man," he said, "before you leave, why'd you come here?"

"This used to be a school," the critic said, "a very famous school called the Freedom School. It's especially famous among libertarians, and a lot of libertarians from all over the country are in Denver right now because that's where the Libertarian Party is having its tenth anniversary national convention."

"Libertarian?" the critic's informant echoed. "What's that?"

"Libertarianism is a political philosophy," the critic told him. "Libertarians want to get rid of government and have a free society in which everybody does whatever he wants and nobody interferes with him. 'Anything that's peaceful' is how one libertarian, a man named Leonard Read, put it."

"You guys don't believe in government?" the kid asked, looking wide-eyed from the critic to his photographer to his two-year-old son to his friends. "I can get into that!"

If only you could, the critic thought, as his party of four adults and one child piled into Scott Monahan's little four-seater car. If only you could.

V. In which the critic reflects on the meaning of it all

The ride back to Denver in the four-seater was followed by a hurried dinner and a ride back to Stapleton Airport in another Yellow Cab. During dinner the critic had learned how the rest of the business of the convention had been worked out: a candidate sympathetic to the Crane Machine had been installed as Alicia Clark's Vice Chair, and candidates sympathetic to the Crane Machine had become a majority on the newly reconsitituted National Committee. "The Empire Strikes Back," one Crane Machine functionary had gleefully told the critic. But the critic didn't see it that way. The candidates who had sewn up the Vice Chair's job and the majority of positions on the NatCom were *sympathetic* to the Crane Machine, but they were far from being Supporters, Hirelings, and Toadies, most of them; and they were equally sympathetic in many cases to other movement factions — provided those factions wanted to work for liberty, not waste their time on bickering and backbiting.

And besides, the critic thought as his cab pulled up at Stapleton, the convention was far less reminiscent of *Star Wars* than of "The Anarchists' Convention" in John Sayles's short story of that name, or the meetings of anarchists (and especially of the Supreme Anarchist Council) in G. K. Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday.* Or perhaps, the critic suddenly realized while tipping the cabbie (so that he began fumbling for his notebook in the middle of offering a tip, dropped the money on the pavement, and bumped heads with the cabbie trying to pick it up), the best symbol of the convention might have been the one Denver tourist attraction he hadn't had a chance to visit because he'd gone down to the Freedom School instead. Perhaps the best symbol of the convention was the Molly Brown House, the home of The Unsinkable Molly Brown, who was a Denver resident for the last thirty-plus years of her life. Molly Brown had been called Unsinkable because she had survived even the sinking of the Titanic. And surely the Libertarian Party had also proved itself unsinkable in its first ten years of existence. Federal and State election laws calculated to subsidize the established parties and impede the progress of any new parties—these had failed to sink it. Divisiveness and faction fighting within the Party and the libertarian movement—these had failed to sink it. The inevitable fumbling and amateurishness of the Party's first efforts at electoral politics, inevitable because the people who were the Party knew and cared nothing for politics but only wanted government off their backs and out of their lives—even these had failed to sink it. Against all odds, it had grown. In a time when party loyalty as such was steadily on the decline all over the country, it had grown. And the delegates had left Denver knowing that the LP would continue to grow, that it would not succumb to takeover as the Freedom School had done—as a strategy of radical inactivism and principled pacifism could only do—but would instead thrive and multiply, with no end in sight but liberty itself. ❑

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BOOKS AND ARTS

The search for self-fulfillment

Book Reviews

The pollster as prognosticator

ANNE B. ZILL

New Rules: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down, *by Daniel Yankelovich. Random House, 264 pp., $15.95.*

IF YOU WERE COMPILING a short list of books on the American condition and what can be done about it at this moment in history, *New Rules* might be on it. Not that it is a particularly profound treatise from any one discipline or combination of disciplines, though it draws upon history, philosophy, economics, and psychology; indeed, its subtitle, *Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down* gives the impression that we are dealing here with a volume sufficiently hip in the "how to" genre to end up on the nonfiction best seller list along with the books on diet and nutrition, sexuality and Cinderella complexes. Title aside, this is an insightful analysis of our contemporary culture, multi-disciplinary, nonideological; the powerful personal vision, really, of pollster Daniel Yankelovich.

Drawing upon such disparate sources as Hannah Arendt, Daniel Bell, Isaiah Berlin, Robert Heilbroner, Irving Howe, Irving Kristol, David Reisman, and the John Gardner of Common Cause fame, as well as innumerable polls and survey research data from his own firm and others, Yankelovich has written a book that posits a singular thesis: that we could be headed for a new cultural revolution in America based upon our development over the next few decades of some shared values that amount to a social ethic of commitment to one another. The revolution part is heady stuff, and Yankelovich develops his hypothesis with a rich mix of logics. He uses Hannah Arendt's definition of revolution with its two principles — that an entirely new "story," not just an ordinary change, must begin with a shift significant enough to modify all "old beliefs, values, meanings, traditions and structures," and that the cause of freedom must be advanced. Yankelovich also lifts from Arendt's writings the corollary notion that politics is distinctly secondary to culture in importance and that any drastic political change would lag way behind the cultural revolution. Pointing to colonial America, he observes that "this revolution was cultural, not political, precisely because it revolved around shared meanings, not toppled institutions." The central theme that took hold was that a free people could overcome mass poverty by productivity coupled with self-denial.

To get to the next revolution Yankelovich draws upon his reading in all the various disciplines as well as on hundreds of interviews with people around the country. The self-denial ethic worked well for a long, long time, but began to go by the board in the post-World War II boom years when the logic fell apart — suddenly everyone had a measure of prosperity and there was no longer the need to save and wait and deny oneself. The old self-denial culture began to be replaced by a sense of affluence, a sense that more of everything was possible. Yankelovich points to various experimental strategies during the third quarter of the twentieth century based on a culture of affluence that stressed the self, the importance of getting it all in (or out), of fulfilling every individual need. The best parts of the book are those that detail these shifts in the psyche of Americans, juxtaposing them against a shifting economic scene as oil becomes OPEC dominated, as our in-

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dustry competitiveness and our labor productivity declines, as government deficits balloon, and inflation soars. "For the rest of this century," Yankelovich writes, "American culture will be a cockpit of conflict as political passions rise, single issue politics gain momentum, and new religious movements abound."

One thing lacking in *New Rules* is a definitive prescription or even a precise definition of the revolution to come. Indeed, the author eschews that path, stating flatly that this is *not* a "how to" book, preferring to hint at the subject. "It is a powerful force that once unleashed works its way irreversibly into the society." Or, "[I]t is nothing less than the search for a new American philosophy of life." Or, "[M]y relatively hopeful outlook grows from a conviction that out of the present disorder something vital and healthy is struggling to be born." His closest attempts at description are psychological articulations, as when he observes that developing an ethic of commitment "hinges on how skillfully the seekers of self-fulfillment can, in the new economic conditions of our era, now discard the most harmful and obsolete features of their life experiments and simultaneously encourage the healthy and adaptive features to come to the fore." Or they are philosophical in tone, as in "Self-fulfillment requires commitments that endure over long periods of time ... through a web of shared meanings that transcend the self conceived as an isolated physical object."

Yankelovich does better when he is declaring what the search for self-fulfillment is not —it is not merely "the excesses of the 'me generation' made decadent by too much affluence," nor is this period in history "proof that the American character is changing for the worse." And what he does better still is debunk a number of common assumptions about what Americans want and don't want, what they believe and don't believe. He argues that all this searching for self-fulfillment that is going on is not a phenomenon limited to a particular class; 80 percent of adults are experimenting with some self-fulfillment quest or other. This focus on self, he argues, is based on what he calls flawed psychological premises, dismissing in his assertion luminaries such as Jean Paul Sartre, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, and A.A. Maslow. Another luminary given his comeupance by Yankelovich is Christopher Jencks, the so-called egalitarian social scientist whose view of the role of luck, among other things, is disputed. Luck is not, as Jencks would have it, an undemocratic phenomenon that must be eliminated by benevolent institutions, but is in fact valued by most Americans because it offers anybody the potential to get rich and get ahead in the social hierarchy. And about those "benevolent institutions," Yankelovich presents ample and convincing polling evidence of what has been happening to Americans' view of government over the last quarter century: "the level of trust that government will do what is right most of the time has been cut in half, from 56 percent to 29 percent."

Though readers of this magazine may not be surprised by the degree of distaste for the federal government currently felt by the U.S. public, they should be pleased at the extent to which *New Rules,* an avowedly non-ideological tome, inadvertently strikes libertarian themes in its explicit detailing of the growth of this dissatisfaction.

Although Paul Goodman back in the beginning of the sixties was characterizing the country as having "a high standard of living of low average quality," and calling for "useful and necessary work, sex without guilt and a sense of community," it took a couple of decades, as Yankelovich demonstrates, for a majority of Americans to:

- Believe that the people running the government are not "smart people who know what they are doing," a drop from *69 percent to 29 percent;*
- Develop a cynical attitude about just whom the government is run for — a few big interests instead of all the people—a rise from *28 percent to 65 percent;*
- Express the conviction that the government wastes our tax dollars, a rise from *42 percent to 77 percent.*

In his economic discussion as well, Yankelovich makes some libertarian points without identifying them as such. He comes down very hard, for example, on our current inflation, attributing its beginnings to the government's policy of deficit financing to pay for the war we'd embarked upon in Vietnam. Bad money resulted, a diluted currency, a cheat on the bill the government, having committed itself to war, was obligated to pay. He notes that for William Rees-Mogg, Irving Friedman, and other analysts, "the causes of modern inflation lie outside the economic system." The political leadership is at fault, says the author, for preferring the fraud of an artificially inflated money supply to the truthful action of facing up to the inevitable lowering of the standard of living that is caused by wars.

Even if you put *New Rules* on your short list of "must read" books that offer a hopeful prognosis of our future along with some important insights, don't expect too much. This is a book with a lot of flaws. Somehow Yankelovich's message does not stay with you for long, in spite of solid, original observations, perhaps because he does not articulate just how the new social ethic of commitment to others might actually come about. In that future that remains foggy there is a failure of vision. Not only does this book not tell us, as those fashionable self-help books purport to do, how to get there from here, but if one were to imagine in Yankelovich's terms a self-fulfilled nation of individuals each committed to others, transcending self, and taking responsibility for the future, what we come up with is a sort of late twentieth century pop psychology version of the perfectibility of man. The scenario is too vague, and even inconsistent at times. On one page the author declares that we need to improve our institutions, not cripple them and on the next page announces his hope that people will "bring a lively skepticism toward institutions in general."

Admirable though interdisciplinary approaches can be, the intellectual underpinnings of *New Rules* come out shallow in the end, perhaps because there is too much chaff in with the wheat, too many Alfred North Whiteheads and John Gardners that have influenced Yankelovich. In fact, this mix of influences and disciplines have even caused an inaccuracy or two. He condemns single issue politics, for instance (a theme of Gardner's, by the way), asserting that "the sum of all their vetoes and pressures practically immobilizes government." What a ridiculous assertion if indeed we are, as he states, in that cockpit of conflict, each of us individually trying to work out a healthy form of self-fulfillment. Of course we are going to have single issue politics, we always have; the real issue is whether we will ever again have a healthy national consensus as well. Over 140 years ago Alexis de Tocqueville noted the tendency of Americans to freely *and constantly* form associations for the purpose of promoting some political principle or other. Why does Yankelovich think we should be different now? Perhaps our progress will be hastened if the government *is* "practically" immobilized.

Another serious flaw is the author's use of the English language; there is a plethora of psychological jargon that frequently rules out either profound thought or plain elegance of statement. Nowhere in this book are we called to responsibility in the world, to be responsible for what we do not necessarily understand, to search for the truth beyond ourselves—or any such thing. Instead, Yankelovich has a penchant for repeating such phrases as "the millenial quar-

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ter" (the final 25 years of this century), the "sacred/expressive aspects of life," "the psychology of affluence," "the *giving-getting* compact," "strong formers," "me-first," and even "self-fulfillment;" they appear every few pages. When too many phrases like "we have moved from an uptight culture set in a dynamic economy to a dynamic culture set in an uptight economy" show up, the entire theme suffers from cliches. Also unfortunate is the textbook style of *New Rules,* requiring the reader to endure a restatement of key points at the beginning and end of each of the four sections, as well as continual updates on where the author has been taking us and where he is planning to go next — a grandiloquent detraction if ever there was one.

Then there is the matter of depending upon survey research data as a scientific justification for a philosophical prognostication of this magnitude. Maybe it is the cast of symbolic characters that have been polled by Yankelovich and woven through his discussion that remain trite and artificial to me. Maybe it is simply the banality of the questions used by pollsters that bothers me. How can queries requiring 'yes' or 'no' answers to statements like "hard work always pays off" or "experience a hungering for community" truly plum the inner aspirations of a person? Without casting aspersions upon the author's analytical abilities or his firm's reputation in the survey research field, I am suggesting that polling may be an insufficient basis on which to construct no less than a calling for a benevolent revolution of the spirit for the American people, come the twenty-first century.

New Rules remains an original and highly personal vision of where we Americans are in our culture and where we could be going, by a writer who knows how to make something of polling data. The future for Yankelovich is somehow devoid of the specter of nuclear mushroom clouds or some other gross miscalculation of our technology, or even of the existence of human beings outside our own country, and I worry that these omissions could mean that the chance for Americans to advance their own cause of freedom is slim, and that by the year 2000 these new rules will no longer matter.

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Destroying the Dolchstosslegende

BILL BIRMINGHAM

Self-Destruction: The Disintegration and Decay of the United States Army during the Vietnam Era, *by "Cincinnatus." W.W. Norton & Co., 288 pp., $15.95.*

ON APRIL 30, 1978, THREE years after the collapse of South Vietnam, the Associated Press distributed an interview with retired general William Childs Westmoreland, who commanded U.S. forces there from 1964 to 1968. "Westmoreland Hasn't Changed Views on War," the headline ran, and indeed he insisted that "militarily we were successful... we didn't lose a single battle above company level... the military were given a job to do by political authority and we put our heart and soul into it. We did our best." The reason the United States lost despite what the general has elsewhere called the "sterling performance of the military" was that, even though "we had the power," the country "didn't have the will." Westmoreland and his colleagues didn't get the proper support; though he would never put it in these words, they were "stabbed in the back." This opinion is quite common today, both in and out of the military.

Self-Destruction asserts the contrary. "America's military had wide latitude of action and a clear opportunity to win in Vietnam," argues the pseudonymous author (who is, according to his publisher, a senior field-grade officer and military historian). "The fact is that the military disaster in Vietnam grew out of ineptitude at the top." Unlike the peddlers of the *Dolchstosslegende,* the stab-in-the-back myth, "Cincinnatus" has produced a work of serious scholarship, including 33 pages of notes and a 24-page bibliography ranging from service journals such as *Army, Armor,* and the *Military Review* to official documents and studies by the U.S. Army War College. In addition, the author interviewed scores of officers who served in Vietnam, "many [of whom] feared that their careers would be jeopardized if their comments were publicly attributed to them." Consequently they were allowed to remain anonymous, in the hope that the reader will "concentrate exclusively upon what is being said rather than upon who is saying it."

KEN COOKE/PICTURE GROUP

According to Cincinnatus, the American strategy in Vietnam was flawed on the most fundamental level. As a writer at the Army War College put it: "All our efforts must be directed toward elimination of the causes of insurgency... military strategy must be subordinate and responsive to pacification strategy." *Pacification* means gaining the support of the people, "winning their hearts and minds," by meeting their social, economic, and political needs. This was essential to victory. "A nation that enjoys the support of its own people," Cincinnatus points out, "will almost inevitably win.... In the past and in many places, governments have gone about cleaning out nests of guerrillas by first gaining the support of their own people and by demonstrating that the guerrillas have no real grievances, no legitimate calls for reform." But as General Sir Robert Thompson, who successfully pacified Malaysia in the 1950s, warned: "Where a guerrilla force enjoys support from the people... it *can never be defeated by military means,* however much it is harassed and attacked, shelled, mortared, and bombed by superior forces of infantry, air, and sea power." (emphasis added) It was a prophetic warning.

Rather than vex themselves with the complexities of pacification (or "counterinsurgency" or "nation-building" or "internal defense and development," etc.—they couldn't even decide what to call it), the U.S. military leadership decided early on that, as General Earle Wheeler put it, "the essence of the problem in Vietnam is military." Or in the words of some anonymous wit: "Grab them by the balls, and their hearts and minds will follow." Instead, the Army decided to fight a war of attrition, to kill guerrillas until

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no more remained. "The only alternative," claimed Westmoreland, "is a war of annihilation." One observer, "in a military-history textbook *used at West Point,*" was to write:

> One thing should be made absolutely clear: attrition is not a strategy. It is irrefutable proof of the absence of any strategy. A commander who resorts to attrition ... turns from warfare as an art and accepts it on the most unprofessional terms imaginable. He uses blood instead of brains ... the United States was strategically bankrupt in Vietnam.

To carry out the bankrupt strategy, Westmoreland and his successors employed a variety of equally dubious tactics. Chief among them was "search and destroy," later renamed "reconnaissance in force" when its reputation became too unsavory. In a search-and-destroy mission, an American unit, usually a battalion, would helicopter into a landing zone in territory believed to be hostile, establish a fire support base, sally forth to "find, fix, and finish" the enemy, and then depart. That, at any rate, was the theory. In practice

> aerial-reconnaissance flights, sweeping back and forth across a particular grid of terrain in ever narrowing arcs, were a dead giveaway to hidden observers in the jungle below.... They could often pinpoint the LZ [landing zone] selected by the Americans and, if they wished, be there waiting to ambush the GIs as they offloaded from their choppers....If the enemy had not located a proposed LZ prior to the beginning of a mission, observation of choppers as they brought in men and materiel to erect a FSB [fire support base] clearly revealed its location. ... Without making contact, an experienced NVA commander could deduce the area through which U.S. troops would conduct their sweep. He could determine how far out from the FSB the GIs would move, for he knew that such units inevitably stayed within supporting range of their 105mm howitzers.

Within that area, it was a simple task to locate the American rifle companies as they prepared their night locations. Enemy scouts

> listened for sounds of digging and for trees being cut for use in defensive cover; they watched for bursting artillery shells as far-away batteries fired defensive registration patterns around the area. Incoming resupply helicopters gave additional evidence, if any was still needed. All this — yet the North Vietnamese or Viet Cong unit had thus far masked its own presence.

It was entirely up to them whether to offer battle, or set ambushes, or plant booby traps, or shell American positions from a distance, or simply slip away undetected. "It can be truthfully said that Americans searched for enemy troops until those soldiers allowed themselves to be found."

There were measures that could have been taken to prevent this (restricting use of helicopters, moving to alternate positions after dark, etc.), but they were rarely used. "Thus," says Cincinnatus, "U.S. troop commanders violated an important principle of war, one that states that a successful campaign is one in which a strike force surprises its foe. Surprise all too often lay with the opponents rather than with those engaged in search and destroy."

Another ineffective tactic was the so-called "harassing and interdiction fire," which dropped artillery rounds on preselected targets where someone thought the enemy might be gathering. (In fact, the targets were often selected purely at random. "The ammo kept coming whether or not we had targets for it," said one artillery captain, "so the batteries fired their allotments every opportunity they had, whether there was actually anything to shoot at or not.") In one year, the Army expended over one million rounds in this fashion—at more than $100 apiece—but "they were not all that effective. Enemy soldiers were trained to disappear into foxholes or tunnels when they heard the fluttering whistle of the first incoming round. The victims who suffered and died were often Vietnamese civilians who had no place to hide." According to David Halberstam, Neil Sheehan once asked Westmoreland if he was "worried by the enormity of civilian casualties which the bombing and shelling were causing in the South. 'Yes,' said Westmoreland, 'but it does deprive the enemy of the population, doesn't it?' " The war of attrition, it turned out, was not an "alternative" to "a war of annihilation"; it *was* a war of annihilation! So much for "winning hearts and minds." In fact, such tactics aided the Viet Cong. "Village sweeps," for example, "inevitably did more harm than good. A village that was 'only' 80 percent VC could usually be counted upon to be a solid 95 percent in favor of the insurgents after an American troop unit had combed through its huts and people." The total failure of American strategy and tactics can be seen in the fact that "As late as Tet 1968, the VC and NVA attacked when and where they wished," anywhere in the country.

The United States couldn't even claim that its mistakes were original. The French had made them all when they were in Vietnam. They called "search-and-destroy" missions "hit and run." They "raked over" the countryside with harassing and interdiction fires and "swept" it in "mopping up" actions (what the U.S. would call "clear and hold.") "French commanders made use of falsified 'body counts,' freely admitting that the way to find a Viet Minh soldier was to look for any dead Vietnamese." And, on the eve of Dien Bien Phu, French general Henri-Eugene Navarre declared: "A year ago none of us could see victory. There wasn't a prayer. Now we see it clearly — like light at the end of a tunnel."

With "Vietnamization" of the war — another French concept — the U.S. taught the Army of the Republic of Vietnam to repeat all the French mistakes the U.S. Army had repeated. "Our heritage to our ally was a form of warfare he could not sustain," says retired general Douglas Kinnard. "The light at the end of the tunnel had been reached, and it was red."

One of the reasons the Army seemed incapable of learning from its mistakes was the "short-tour policy": officers got only six months in combat (enlisted men got twelve) and were often transferred even more frequently than that (one soldier interviewed had five platoon leaders and four company commanders in a single year). As an army Command and General Staff College study delicately put it: "the major deterrent to true professionalism was that an officer did not stay in the same job in the same place long enough to become knowledgeable in the specifics of their [sic] situation." It also did enlisted morale no good, any more than did the incredible and unequal proliferation of medals and awards ("high-ranking officers were regularly cited for combat bravery while only something like one-tenth of the enlisted men who saw service in Vietnam received similar awards"), and the growth in rear-area noncombatants ("In 1968, when the U.S. had 543,000 troops in Vietnam, only some 80,000 combat soldiers were among them.")

The root cause, Cincinnatus argues, was "careerism." After the Korean War, Army Chief of Staff General Maxwell Taylor and his disciples

> "modernized" the army. They laid emphasis on the army as a corporate structure, as a business conglomerate, to be promoted and expanded in much the same way as General Motors or IBM. So it came to pass that a generation of soldier technicians and bureaucrats, interested and effective in personnel management, were promoted into top slots. "Duty, honor, and country" was replaced by the need to be in the right job at the right time.

This came to be called "ticket-punching." There were certain unwritten requirements for advancement: airborne wings (or a green beret or Ranger tabs, depending on the current fashion), overseas duty, a bachelor's or even master's degree, a Pentagon staff position, early selection for Command and General Staff College, and so forth. A combat command was an especially important "punch," of course, and the six-month tour let almost everybody have one. ("The fallacy," said one artillery captain, "was that if you were really effective as a combat leader, you got six months.

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If you were the village idiot... you still got six months.") Almost everybody could get medals too, especially the high-ranking officers; "a full colonel ...was awarded a Silver Star for flying frozen Thanksgiving turkeys into a 'besieged' Special Forces camp." And all those rear-area support troops "created a 'need' for numerous logistical commands, each to be headed by a general or two who have to have high-ranking staffs to aid each of them. It is no wonder that at one point there were over sixty-four generals serving simultaneously in the tiny country of Vietnam."

"One cannot blame the officer corps for this system," said Colonel David Hackworth, who resigned from the army in 1971 in disgust at careerism and ticket-punching, "for they were just awash in the tide of the system; to fight it meant banishment to Fort Nowhere and the guaranteed end of a career." Indeed, in his book *The War Managers,* Douglas Kinnard revealed that large numbers of generals strongly disagreed with the conduct of the war (at least, that's what they claimed when he polled them in 1974) but kept quiet because "their careers were at stake and they could not afford to make waves." One wonders if even Westmoreland knew that his strategy was absurd, but couldn't admit that he only promulgated it in order to make Chief of Staff.

What Westmoreland really believes in his heart of hearts, however, is irrelevant. The real problem, Cincinnatus points out, is that

> as Vietnam recedes into the background, the army's institutional memory is quickly being purged of what little knowledge was acquired. Those few lessons learned will soon disappear as officers leave the system for retirement or are assigned to other pursuits. Yet unless that war is carefully analysed and its lessons truly learned, it may well be that, faced with any similar situation in the future, the army will once more react as it did then—*and we will lose again.*

The fundamental problem, as he sees it, is "the need for rededication to ethical concepts" in the officer corps to stamp out careerism and related evils, and provide the army with "an ethical base for its policies." Interestingly enough, among the questions Cincinnatus wants the army to consider are "the usefulness of military force" and "what is and should be the role of the U.S.A. in the world?" Once upon a time, of course, the role of the U.S.A. in the world did not involve the use of military force to reorder world affairs; the last remnants of this policy expired shortly after World War II, with the rise of the American imperium. Now it just so happens that this same period saw the rise of careerism and corruption in the American Army. There may quite possibly be a connection here; if so, the army's moral regeneration depends on the return of a moral (ie: noninterventionist) foreign policy.

After this book was written, it was revealed that "Cincinnatus" is in fact Cecil B. Currey, a Professor of Military History at the University of South Florida who holds a reserve rank of lieutenant colonel in the chaplain corps and is currently assigned to the Pentagon. According to *The New York Times* (May 4, 1981) the news was leaked in anonymous letters (apparently from the Pentagon) to *The Washington Post* and *Christian Science Monitor* charging that Professor Currey is "unqualified" to write on Vietnam and his book should be ignored. "In the last decade," Currey wrote in *Self-Destruction,* "there have appeared a pride of authors who have commented, some with clarity, on problems within the army." Almost without exception, "[o]nce a person became a critic, no matter what value he may have had or credentials he may have held, the army tried to find a way to dismiss him as a 'hostile' assailant. It was a difficult battle for any evaluator to win." Do you suppose that, when he wrote those lines, Professor Currey had any idea that he might be writing of himself?

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The pursuit of an ideal

DANIEL KLEIN

Fugitive Essays: Selected Writings of Frank Chodorov, *compiled, edited, and with an Introduction by Charles H. Hamilton. Liberty Press, 419 pp., $4.00.*

THIS NEW COLLECTION of political essays, all keenly espousing libertarian ideas, ranges over topics like the natural rights of man, the health of a domestic economy, the question of international security, education, and the "Commie Menace." They were written by the late Frank Chodorov, a man who dedicated his energies to understanding and popularizing the social theory of individualism and liberty, although he worked in the deepest dark ages of these ideas. Still, he pressed onward, developing and writing about an ignored philosophy.

Everyone who knew him seems to have been able immediately to see honesty and devotion written all over him. Murray Rothbard said in a tribute shortly after Chodorov's death in 1966, "Frank Chodorov stood out like a blaze of radiant light... his tie askew, his balding head disheveled, the ashes from his beloved pipe flying all around, his intelligent and merry eyes twinkling as he scored some outrageous, logical, and beautifully penetrating point." Frank Chodorov was the rare type of guy who asks, "What in life is more worthwhile than the pursuit of an ideal?"

Chodorov did not begin his political journalism until late in life, after being involved in sundry business activities. In 1937, at the age of 50, he became director of the Henry George School in New York and took his first job as editor with the school's paper, *The Freeman.* Chodorov held this post for five years, and then in 1944 began his own four-page monthly called *analysis.* This publication contained perhaps the most powerful brilliance of Chodorov's career. Twenty-two of the 46 articles that appear in *Fugitive Essays* were originally printed in *analysis.*

Chodorov's editorships with *analysis,* later with *Human Events,* and then again with *The Freeman,* were crucial in unifying the few thinkers in the Old-Right camp of the 1940s and '50s, like William F. Buckley (who later changed his views), Murray Rothbard, Edmund A. Opitz, and James J. Martin. The "right" at that time represented military isolationism, free trade, and individualism. "The amount of government I believe in would fit inside my kitchen," was Chodorov's slogan.

As an essayist, Chodorov didn't engage in rigorous research and long-winded academic analysis. His essays are stylishly polemic and convincing, framing his insights to make the libertarian rejoice and to fill the statist with pangs of confusion.

In one of the fugitive essays, "A Fifty-Year Project," Chodorov emphasizes the importance of understanding how the decline in American individualism came to be. He says, "[T]he unmaking of a national character is the work of genius. The accomplishment is too great to be ignored."

> A study of just how it was done is in order, and it ought to be undertaken at once, before the American individualist becomes a subject for speculative archaeology. There are still some living remnants of the species, and traces of the way they behaved and thought have not yet been entirely obliterated. A thorough analysis of the character transformation may well serve the twenty-first century in its disillusionment; and it may help them find their way back to a sense of freedom; provided, of course, such a work should escape the bonfire of past values that always lights up the road of socialism.

One of Chodorov's favorite issues was communism—both the myth of the necessity of international containment and the reality of increasing collectivist tendencies at home. He believed in the certain failure of any collectivist system, but

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considered the mentality that advocates socialism mixed with a heavy investment in imperialism (a mentality which permeated his day) to be the worst menace.

"If all the card-carrying members of the Communist party in the United States were put in jail or deported, it would have little or no effect on the growth of communism in America.... [T]hey are not nearly as effective as the average Republican or Democrat who professes to hate communism and all it stands for." America, "land of freedom," was instituting collectivist programs right and left during World War II—nationalization of industries, growing taxes, more labor laws, public projects, war bonds, etc.—to "deal with the temporary crises of war."

But as Chodorov pointed out:

> If The War lasts long enough, long enough to become a habit of mind, the totalitarianism will have lost its initial disfavor. The will to freedom can be broken by adjustment to subservience. Besides, the economic conditions resulting from The War will be difficult enough to make continuation of control a compelling plausibility. In their general bewilderment the people will ask for direction, and direction means control. ["A Jeremiad," August 1950]

Chodorov's solution was to let the communists be. A society becomes strong through production. Communist-militarism is a system of destruction destined to poverty. Also, "[T]he weakness of a conqueror increases in proportion to the extent of his conquest."

Chodorov concludes his penetrating essay on the Cold War, "A War to Communize America," with this admonishment:

> The important thing for America now is not to let the fearmongers (or the imperialists) frighten us into a war which, no matter what the military outcome, is certain to communize our country.

Today, the libertarian outlook isn't nearly as dismal or lonely as it was in Chodorov's day. Politicians, journalists, scholars, and other prominent figures are found bantering about phrases like "freedom of choice," "competition," "individual rights," etc. However, a heavy dose of Chodorovism is needed on the international scene. History has seen numerous occasions on which growing classical liberal movements have become ignored fads of the past, overnight, due to a fabricated or exaggerated national emergency of one kind or another. Without international disarmament and free trade, all other libertarian progress is immaterial. The public mentality must be changed so that militarism is regarded as an outrage.

If only we could get more people to read Chodorov.

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Another view of racism

DAVID BRUDNOY

The Other Side of Racism: a Philosophical Study of Black Race Consciousness, *by Anne Wortham. Ohio State University Press, 353 pp., $12.50.*

MISS ANNE WORTHAM, soon to take her doctorate in sociology at Boston College, comes to the problem of race from an unexpected direction; that is, for a Negro woman. (And "Negro" is her term of choice.) In *The Other Side of Racism,* Miss Wortham expounds the doctrine of individualism and true liberty. She stands close beside that handful of other blacks on the Right of whom Professor Thomas Sowell is today perhaps the best known, though she take her philosophic cues frequently from Ayn Rand and Nathaniel Branden.

Disdaining a label for herself, she would nonetheless probably respond more contentedly to libertarian or Objectivist than to any other. Still, her approach to the problems at hand is compatible with that of many conservatives and with that of very few liberals and leftists. Hers is an attitude that boldly challenges the assumptions of the Establishment media Negroes, the blacks whose endless calls for more government action, more programs, more Affirmative Action, more special consideration, seem to many Americans to typify the American Negro community.

Miss Wortham has come out of the segregated South, has grown up in the days before Civil Rights, has studied first at Tuskegee Institute and only later at the integrated colleges of the North. She knows as a woman and as a Negro the dimensions of discrimination against her people as against her gender. And yet she resists, merrily and with enormously impressive intellectual conviction, the siren call of the paternalistic state. She begins her book with a valiant call to arms:

"I have singled out Negroes, not because they are the only abusers of freedom and individual sovereignty, but because I am convinced that most Americans are so inundated by cries of freedom from Negro intellectuals and political leaders that they fail to recognize that, more often than not, these apostles of freedom are among its first violators.... It is not in the polarization of the races that I find the greatest threat to the stability of the American society, but in their combined efforts to undercut the stability of the single most important entity on which a rational social system and harmonious social relations depend: *the free and sovereign individual.*"

This is no reflexively rightist screed against the liberal tinkering of our day; rather, it is a remarkably impressive analysis of race consciousness and racism, their causes and results and, very importantly, their differences. Miss Wortham is no Aunt Jemina, no self-hater, no would-be Caucasian. She has looked at today and at yesterday and seen how smoothly America has fallen into the trap of accepting the calls of the interveners and the big government do-gooders, and how alluring the condescending and social engineering programs and policies have been to guilt-ridden whites, as to opportunistic and rationalizing blacks. Here is Miss Wortham on the "modern unprejudiced nondiscriminating liberal": "[They] see collective effort as the only means of finding a solution to racial disharmony. The individual's self-interest must be sacrificed to the 'public good,' they say, and they will determine in their councils and academic workshops what constitutes the public and what is the good. They will do what they think is good for everybody. And when these reformers find that people do not want to be done good to, they inevitably invoke political coercion to put the nation's ethical house in order — solve the problems of racial discrimination by regulating and administering the individuality of man out of existence."

The Other Side of Racism, which has been ignored by the mainstream journals of review and also, incredibly enough, by conservative and libertarian journals (until now), investigates the problem areas in the thought of blacks and whites alike who dwell always on the collective and forget the individual. The book is of vast importance, quite possibly of even more importance than the latest tome *(Ethnic America)* by Professor Sowell. It carries us far into a cogent understanding of the true, broad scope of racism, from an angle that is compelling, intriguing, brilliantly argued, and horribly frightening to Establishment thought.

David Brudnoy is a nationally syndicated columnist who also reviews books and films.

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Books in Brief

Philosophical Explanations, *by Robert Nozick. Harvard University Press, 764 pp., $25.00.*

LIBERTARIANS WHO SEE Robert Nozick as a political philosopher because of *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Basic Books, 1974) may be surprised

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by this major new book, which devotes 137 pages to metaphysics ("The Identity of the Self," "Why is There Something Rather Than Nothing?"), 121 pages to epistemology ("Knowledge and Skepticism"), and 356 pages to value ("Free Will," "Foundations of Ethics," "Philosophy and the Meaning of Life") — "Over the years," Nozick writes, "I have spent more time thinking about the problem of free will — it felt like banging my head against it — than about any other philosophical topic except perhaps the foundation of ethics." Why *philosophical explanations?* Nozick sees proofs as coercive and suggests instead explanations of *how* something is possible — leading not to a single view, but to a *basketful* of admissible philosophical views. Readers looking to be indoctrinated should be warned: Nozick's method is to point out all the paradoxes, contrary arguments, and weaknesses, even in those views in the basket which he ranks first. However, readers who share Nozick's view that philosophical thought can be an art and who enjoy seeing a first-rate mind at work — and at play — will find something entrancing on almost every page.

Radiation and Human Health, *by John W. Gofman. Sierra Club Books, 928 pp., $29.95.*

IN ITS OCTOBER 1979 ISSUE, *The Libertarian Review* published an in-depth cover interview with John Gofman — "Liberty and Nuclear Power." Gofman, whom the *Village Voice* had named "the father of the antinuclear movement," identified himself for the first time as a libertarian, defending individualism, human rights, private property, and a free market society over collectivist alternatives. He became a figure of considerable controversy: on the left, for his orthodox libertarian views, and among libertarians, for his unorthodox challenging of conventional libertarian views on pollution. Gofman held that pollution was a form of aggression, an anti-libertarian violation of individual rights, and argued that enshrining into our legal code the unlimited right to dump carcinogens into the environment — despite the inability of science to pinpoint a causal relationship between a given emission into the environment and a given cancer — risked genocide. Gofman's latest book is a blockbuster, *Radiation and Human Health,* which is "a comprehensive investigation of the evidence relating low-level radiation to cancer and other diseases." It is not a political book, but a scientific one, Gofman's massive *magnum opus* on a subject he has been concerned with most of his scientific career. In his *LR* interview and in speeches and debates before libertarian meetings, Gofman was forced to summarize most of his reasoning concerning radiation and cancer in the course of making out his case against nuclear power, a case which ranged from economics and political economy to medicine. In *RADI,* Gofman sets out to provide a readable analysis of the relationship between cancer and radiation. The book contains chapters on "energy interchanges and health," "the origins of human cancer," human epidemiological evidence concerning radiation carcinogesis, public health questions, cancer and medical therapeutic irradiation, and genetics, to name just a handful of dozens of topics considered. This book provides the background reasoning and evidence with which Gofman supports his political claims, but more important, it is an attempt to estimate systematically the damage caused by low-level radiation of all types to the health and well-being of human beings. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Gofman, one owes it to oneself to become acquainted with his systematic views, not merely with conclusions pulled out of context. Available from the Committee for Nuclear Responsibility, $29.95 including postage, P.O. Box 11207, San Francisco, California 94101.

New Individualist Review, *edited by Ralph Raico. Liberty Press, 993 pp., $12.00.*

THIS HANDSOME VOLume contains all 17 issues of the *New Individualist Review* published between 1961 and 1968, with an introduction by Milton Friedman. When it began publication in 1961, under the editorship of Ralph Raico, now *Inquiry's* Senior Editor, *NIR* was nearly alone in advocating a classical liberal or libertarian point of view, or in publishing such diverse modern individualists as Milton Friedman, Murray Rothbard, F.A. Hayek, George Stigler, Wilhelm Roepke, Ludwig von Mises, W.H. Hutt, and Israel Kirzner. *NIR* was broadly committed to individualism, but in its pages there was always a certain tension between libertarianism and traditionalist conservatism. In part, this is what made *NIR* exciting. It contained the first major clash between Bill Buckley and an antiwar libertarian, Ronald Hamowy, debating the foreign policy views of *National Review.* It published Milton Friedman on "Is a Free Society Stable"; Murray Rothbard on the public sector, Herbert Hoover, H.L. Mencken, and "The Negro Revolution"; Robert Hurt on "Sin and the Criminal Law"; Ben Rogge on the new conservatism; and the first critiques of regulatory agencies in the modern "Chicagoite" vein outside the more technical *Journal of Law and Economics.* Ralph Raico's occasional series on "Great Individualists of the Past" — including von Humboldt and Benjamin Constant — helped reintroduce classical liberal thought to a modern audience, and *NIR* in general maintained standards which have yet to be matched in a journal of its type. *New Individualist Review* is a gold mine; at $12, this beautifully-bound volume is one of the year's greatest values. Hats off to Liberty Press!

Protection or Free Trade, *by Henry George. Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 335 pp., $10.00.*

WITH THE DRIVE FOR ever-widening restrictions of international trade continuing under the Reagan administration, it is interesting to learn that every argument for so-called protectionism was heard — and refuted — in 1886 by Henry George in his classic, *Protection or Free Trade.* This veritable encyclopedia of arguments about free trade has been republished by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, and we are indebted to it.

Realizing that trade enhances the well-being of all people, George shows the downright silliness of protectionist ideas, which are always based on the premise that imports are bad and exports, good. "Could there be any queerer inversion of ideas?" he asks. "Should we not think even a dog has lost his senses that snapped and snarled when given a bone and wagged his tail when a bone was taken from him?"

It is odd, he notes, that the protectionists use warfare metaphors in references to free trade ("import invasion," for example), when in fact it is protectionism that is a prelude to war and even a simulation of war. "What protection teaches us, is to do to ourselves what enemies do to us in time of war," George writes.

George not only understands how harmful trade barriers are, he realizes they are the product of an exploiting class. He also understands the connection between free trade and world peace. As he says,

> Protection ... has always found an effective ally in those national prejudices and hatreds which are in part the cause and in part the result of wars that have made the annals of mankind a record of bloodshed and devastation — prejudices and hatreds which have everywhere been the means by which the masses have been induced to use their own power for their own enslavement.

Libertarians will disagree

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with George's views on land-ownership and property taxes, but they comprise a minor part of this masterful presentation of the case for a worldwide free market.

The Theory of Money and Credit, *by Ludwig von Mises, Liberty Press, 539 pp., $11.00 hb.; $5.00 pb.*

WITH THE RECENT centenary of Ludwig von Mises's birthday, the Liberty Press reprint of *The Theory of Money and Credit (TOMAC)*, perhaps Mises's greatest work, is especially appropriate. Starting with the fundamental unit of economic analysis, the individual, Mises proceeds to develop a sophisticated theory of the nature and importance of money, its role in a market economy, and the consequences of political intervention through the manipulation of monetary variables. Among the important insights in this work are an explanation of how free markets develop money, the importance of money for economic calculation, how inflation destroys the possibility of accurate profit and loss calculations, and an explanation of business cycles. Although *TOMAC* was originally published in 1912, it still stands as the most impressive work ever produced in monetary theory — while not recommended for casual reading, it is unparalleled for its sophisticated insights into economic phenomena in general and monetary phenomena in particular. This edition contains the essay on "Monetary Reconstruction" written for the 1953 Yale University Press Edition, and a new Foreword by Murray N. Rothbard.

National Defense, *by James Fallows. Random House, 204 pp., $12.95.*

AS THE ADMINISTRATION prepares to spend $1.6 trillion over the next years for "defense," many commentators are reflecting on the impact this may have on the American economy and questioning the wisdom of throwing money at the Pentagon. James Fallows, Washington editor of the *Atlantic*, has produced a book which asks some tough questions about the nature of our national defense and the spending done in its name and debunks much of our current defense wisdom: the "culture of procurement" that spends money on technologically sophisticated weapons where simpler systems would do, the managerial mentality that substitutes computer printouts for reality, and the doomsday sleuths, among others. Fallows is a penetrating critic, and will probably have a much-deserved impact. But two *caveats* should be added. Fallows is an advocate of conscription, explicitly attacking the libertarian critique of the draft. And much of his otherwise sound analysis is reduced to efficiency-mongering because he sidesteps all questions of foreign policy. No criticism of our manpower and weapons is really complete without a full-scale questioning of what all this defense spending is supposed to be *for:* to implement an interventionist foreign policy of deterrence and alliances. Those criticisms aside, this is a good place to begin rethinking some of the assumptions behind what passes for defense policy, particularly during the bleak Reagan years to come.

Socialism, by Ludwig von Mises. Liberty Press, 597 pp., $11.00 hb., $5.00 pb.

ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY published in 1922, Ludwig von Mises's *Socialism* still remains as the definitive refutation of nearly every brand of socialism that has ever been devised. Unfortunately, Mises's work has never achieved proper attention and *Socialism* is no exception, for this is the book that should have put socialism and communism on the intellectual defensive for the reminder of the twentieth century. At the time when this book was written, a sizeable percentage of the intellectuals of the Western world were flirting with the ideologies of Bolshevism and collectivism, but Mises is uncompromising in his rejection of such a philosophy. Most of *Socialism* consists of showing how the schemes of central planning were injurious to both economic prosperity and individual liberty. Perhaps the strongest argument Mises makes is that any economic system that disposes of free market pricing of resources is unable to engage in rational profit and loss calculations. In closing, it should be noted that *Socialism* is basically a critical work which cannot be fully understood unless one also understands its companion volume, *Liberalism,* where Mises outlines his idea of the "free and prosperous commonwealth." This edition contains a new introduction by F. A. Hayek.

The National Letters

On literary welfare (Part II)

JEFF RIGGENBACH

AID TO THE ARTS IS one of the few activities of government that is almost never seriously questioned, even in this era of tax revolts and widespread bipartisan distrust of politicans and the political process. It's true, of course, that federal aid to the arts is one of the few sections of Uncle Sam's budget which is actually smaller this fiscal year than it was last fiscal year. But though its belt has been tightened somewhat, the federal arts bureaucracy remains in place, still unchallenged in any fundamental sense. There was some talk early in the year in some quarters of the Reagan administration – notably those inhabited by the likes of David Stockman, a man consistently and conspicuously more radical than his boss – about abolishing entirely the two flagship government arts agencies, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH); but nothing came of it. And even if something had, it would have made little difference in the overall scheme of things. The NEA and the NEH are only the most visible of the federal government's efforts to aid the arts. They are almost literally the merest tip of an enormous iceberg of such federal aid. Together, the two Endowments spent only about $300 million per year in their best-funded years. And $300 million has been estimated to be less than two percent of the total annual federal investment in aid to the arts. Even if the Reagan administration had had the courage of what it claims are its convictions, and had abolished the two Endowments entirely, the dent in the federal arts bureaucracy would scarcely have been felt.

This is not, to be sure, the impression you received if you spent much time this past summer listening to the loud public wailing and anguished gnashing of teeth in which lobbyists for the arts were then indulging themselves at the mere prospect of modest cutbacks in their funding. "The government support for the arts," wrote California Chamber Symphony founder and conducter-in-chief Henri Temianka in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* in May, "benefits millions of young people who, without exposure to the arts, would grow up to be spiritual morons." With less government support of the arts, he prophesied, "civilization would be impoverished, and we would have a surplus of 10-speed bicycle repairmen." In July, theaters in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, Miami, and Atlanta interrupted their performances with periodic five second blackouts, to dramatize the loss they faced because of impending cuts in federal arts funding. And Rockefeller Foundation President Richard Lyman told Congress the proposed cuts were "punitive" and "severe" and would "do lasting harm to a very promising effort to broaden and deepen the American people's cultural opportunities." In a word, we

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were put on notice over the summer: cut funding for the arts and you'll wake up one morning and find that the arts have died overnight.

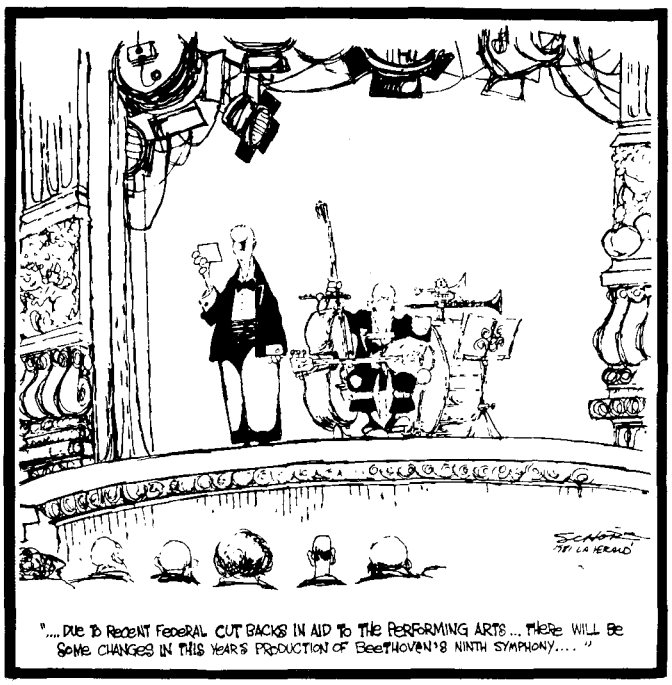
Would that it were so easy! But alas, it is not. Because the amount which has been cut out of the budget for the National Endowments for Fiscal 1982 is such a tiny fraction of the total amount actually spent on the arts every year by the U.S. Government, we cannot look forward to the early extinction of the arts in America—enticing as that prospect might seem and fervently though we might hope to see it.

But wait. Do I detect among those in my audience some evidence of consternation that I should be publicly wishing the demise of the arts in America? Can such things be? Yes, they can. For there is a large and important distinction to be made whenever the topic now under discussion is addressed –the distinction between Art, on the one hand, and The Arts, on the other. This is not my distinction, I hasten to add. It was first made, so far as I know, by Ronald Berman, a former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the federal agency which stands in relation to the NEA about as Tweedledum stands in relation to Tweedledee. Mr. Berman first offered his distinction to the public in an article early last year in *Commentary* magazine, which began by frankly acknowledging that "[i]n the 14 years since the inception of the National Endowment for the Arts, and after the expenditure of the better part of a billion dollars, we are hard put to name a single work of art worth recollecting that it has made possible. Nor can we associate its support with any great enterprise in training or apprenticeship. Nor can we connect that support with a productive idea affecting the understanding of art either by artists or their audience."

Where, then, had the billion dollars in NEA money gone? Not to Art, Mr. Berman answered, but to The Arts, which is a different thing entirely.

In the year and a half since Mr. Berman's article appeared in *Commentary,* his distinction between Art and The Arts has been taken up by other hands, most notably those associated with *Harper's* magazine. *Harper's* Washington editor Michael Macdonald Mooney made extensive use of it in his book *The Ministry of Culture,* published this past November. And *Harper's* editor-in-chief Lewis Lapham ran it through its by-now-familiar paces again in his "Easy Chair" column only month before last. Yet it still seems not to have attracted the public recognition it so richly deserves. What precisely is the distinction between Art and The Arts? At base it is the same as the distinction between the individual and the institution. "'The arts,'" Lapham writes, "(at least as perceived by congressmen, corporate vice presidents, and the authors of federal guidelines) allow for a bureaucratic shape.... Art remains too much within the province of the individual, an unpredictable entity that cannot be relied upon to correctly process the forms." The Arts is the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines; Art is Carole King and Keith Jarrett, Ansel Adams and Georgia O'Keeffe, Joanna Russ and Lawrence Ferlinghetti.

Needless to say, given a choice in the matter, government would rather support The Arts than support Art. And so it is, Michael Macdonald Mooney writes, that "[s]ymphony orchestras received 75 percent...of all NEA dollars distributed to music" between the time of the agency's founding in the mid-1960s and the end of Fiscal 1979. So it is that federal arts dollars doled out to the visual arts have always ended up in the hands of institutions, not artists: even in the case of the NEA's "Works of Art in Public Places" program, which was widely touted (mostly by the NEA at taxpayer expense) for providing "opportunities, challenges and employment


"...DUE TO RECENT FEDERAL CUT BACKS IN AID TO THE PERFORMING ARTS... THERE WILL BE SOME CHANGES IN THIS YEAR'S PRODUCTION OF BEETHOVEN'S NINTH SYMPHONY...."

for living American artists of exceptional talent and of regional or national significance," when Mooney attempted to identify some of these beneficiaries he found that "the list of grant recipients did not include the name of a single artist." So it is too that more than two thirds of the money NEA spends each year promoting literature goes to institutions, not to writers.

Is it any wonder that we cannot name a single work of art worth recollecting which government subsidies have made possible? Works of art worth recollecting are always made by individuals; they are never made by institutions. The most institutions can do is preserve and popularize those memorable works of art which have already been brought into existence. And the institutions which have done the best job of this preservation and popularization have almost invariably managed to achieve long term economic viability without having to rely on federal money. It is one of the cruel ironies of our multi-billion dollar federal arts subsidy that while the lion's share of each year's budget goes to established cultural institutions, the loot is divided among so many such institutions that no single one is significantly dependent upon it.

While it is true, for example, that almost all the federal music money goes to symphony orchestras and almost all the federal drama money goes to theater companies, it is also true, as *Newsweek* reported in March, that "[i]t is the rare theater or symphony that gets more than a small fraction of its budget from Federal grants; the average of 30 major nonprofit theaters was 4.6 percent last year." A report in *New West* the following month noted that the major cultural institutions on the West Coast were no exception to this rule. "Obviously," *New West* music writer Alan Rich remarked, "the larger organizations will suffer the least, because even the money they currently get from Washington is small potatoes against other support. The 1980-1981 federal handout to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, for example, is $437,500 against a $12 million total budget; the San Francisco Opera gets $500,000...against a $15 million budget. A cutback from Washington will hurt, of course, but it won't put this kind of organization out of business."

Similarly, while it is true that much of the federal money purportedly spent in support

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of literature is doled out to publishing companies, not writers, it is also true that most of the largest of the grants given to publishers are of virtually no importance to the continuation of the projects they support. Mooney cites the case of *Literary Classics of the United States,* "a series of popular editions of nineteenth century American authors – Mark Twain, Howells, Poe, Melville, and others," which the National Endowment for the Humanities decided to fund early in 1979. The series was to be brought out by a commercial publisher, Random House, with all costs of publication being absorbed by NEH and/or the Ford Foundation, which NEH had persuaded to become involved in the project. NEH was to put up $1,000,000 toward the cost of the project; the Ford Foundation was to put up another $800,000. Any profits accruing to the project were to be collected, and kept, by Random House.

Then, while plans for the *Literary Classics* were being firmed up, *but before final approval had been given to the project by the National Council on the Humanities* (the presidentially appointed, 26-member advisory panel which must pass final judgment on all NEH grants before they can become reality), Harcourt Brace Jovanovich announced *America's Library,* a fifty-volume, multi-million dollar set of books "with specifications," Mooney writes, "nearly identical to those proposed to NEH by [Jason] Epstein of Random House, [Daniel] Aaron of Harvard University [who had agreed to serve as a scholarly consultant on the series], and [Roger] Kennedy of the Ford Foundation." So what happened? Was the NEH series abandoned as obviously superfluous? Don't be absurd. Those working on the NEH project went to the developers of *America's Library* and persuaded them, Mooney writes, "that it was Harcourt Brace Jovanovich's 'patriotic duty to withdraw.'" And a million dollars in public funds was squandered.

And why? "The reason given for the series was that many of the works of nineteenth-century American authors were out of print and not readily available to scholars," Mooney writes. But in fact, of course, "the new popular publication of nineteenth-century American authors had nothing whatever to do with making out-of-print works available to scholars; on the contrary, NEH was funding commercial competition to commercial publishers' existing editions of the same works."

According to *Publishers Weekly* (May 1, 1981), the first four of these wholly unnecessary, taxpayer-funded volumes "are to appear in spring 1982." Among the titles involved are *Typee, Omoo, Mardi, Redburn, White-Jacket,* and *Moby Dick,* all by Herman Melville, all available in paperback at any well-stocked paperback bookshop, and all available at equally low cost in hardcover at any well-stocked second-hand bookshop. Yet Cheryl Hurley, executive director of Literary Classics of the United States, is quoted straight-facedly by *Publishers Weekly* as having said, apparently with a straight face of her own, that "[m]aking the collected works of America's finest writers available to the general consumer is our goal." The Literary Classics of the United States will sell, by the way, for $20 a volume—at a time when 80 percent of all the books sold in this country are paperbacks which sell for two or three dollars.

In similar style – a style which might be called High Hypocrisy if it were to be dignified with a name – the NEA annual report solemnly declares that "[u]ltimately, the Literature Program is devoted to helping ... the writer's words" — that is, the words and works of all those contemporary American writers who have it in them "to shape generations ... and to change history," as Thoreau did and as Harriet Beecher Stowe did—to "reach the public." But actions speak louder than words. And as I have pointed out, the federal arts bureaucrats more often fund institutions than individuals, despite the fact that it is only individuals who create works capable of shaping generations and changing history. And, as the story of the Literary Classics of the United States shows, when they do fund individual writers, the arts bureaucrats more often fund the dead than the living—though even the dead are placed under pressure to eschew the sort of iconoclasm and irreverence which some say is almost invariably an ingredient in any book which really *does* shape generations and change history.

Mooney reports that in 1972 one of the most active of the federal welfare agencies concerned with The Arts, the National Park Service (which produces films, provides the operating funds for Washington's Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and owns and operates theaters all over the United States, most notably Ford's Theater in the nation's capital) forcibly closed a production it had been funding of playwright Paul Shyre's one-actor show, *An Unpleasant Evening with H. L. Mencken* – on the ground that the Sage of Baltimore's opinions on such matters as the South, evangelical Christianity, and government censorship were "in poor taste or otherwise inappropriate" and "might be objectionable" in the eyes of the Georgians, Mississippians, Baptists, Methodists, and Bluenoses who sat on the congressional subcommittees which funded the theater where these opinions were being aired. To their credit, the Park Service bureaucrats permitted the show to reopen, but not until they'd had a chance to "soften up" Mencken's tasteless, inappropriate, and objectionable opinions. And the bowdlerized version of the show then "came and went from Ford's Theater," Mooney writes, "to delighted reviews and audiences."

Dead writers may have to endure such involuntary surgery from time to time in order to qualify for government funding, but they at least stand some real chance of actually winning such funding in the first place. For living writers, the writers the federal Arts Endowment is supposedly designed to support, the chance of getting any federal money is approximately that of the proverbial snowball in Hell. Last year alone, NEA funneled money into 105 orchestras, 42 opera companies, 500 museums, 150 theater groups, 63 dance companies, 200 literary magazines, and 700 independent presses — a total of 1,760 institutions. And this doesn't even count the further hundreds of state and local government arts centers and arts councils and arts education commissions and assorted other arts bureaucracies which also soak up federal arts endowment money every year. Nor does it count the dozens of regional arts bureaucracies which often soak up the same funds at an even faster pace. To sum up, then: NEA poured money into at least 2,000 institutions last year alone, while in that same year it distributed money to only 147 living writers. In the entire 16 years of NEA's existence it has distributed money to only 900 living writers.

And the living writers who have been thus favored have been almost entirely of two types. The first is the type of writer who has already shaped generations and changed history with his writing, despite his not having previously had any access to government handouts; the sort of writer who is awarded a grant not because he needs it to reach his audience, but because he has proven that he *doesn't* need it, by reaching his audience under his own steam. "Is not a Patron, my Lord," Samuel Johnson wrote the Earl of Chesterfield in 1755 in reply to the latter's offer to become Johnson's patron, "one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help?"

So it would seem to be, at

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any rate, where the patronage of Uncle Sam is concerned . . . unless, of course, one is the opposite sort of writer entirely, the sort of writer who entirely lacks the talent, the determination, the ingenuity—whatever it is exactly that makes it possible to survive one's struggle in the water and make it to the relative comfort of land. If you are the sort of writer who is absolutely certain to drown without assistance of some kind, the sort of writer who simply cannot earn his living by writing however hard he may try, but who lacks the self-discipline to work at it anyway, without promise of monetary reward or even of publication, in whatever hours remain to him outside those he spends working, eating, sleeping, and attending to the problems of daily life—if you're this kind of writer, you can get federal handouts almost as easily as the kind of writer who doesn't need them at all. Indeed, the kind of writer who is in fact the neediest of all, the most genuinely dependent on federal largesse, the writer who could not survive as a writer without it, has become so common a sight in American publishing that he has also become the most common popular stereotype of the federally subsidized creative artist. "[W]hen you turn over a rock in search of a serious artist" these days, *The Washington Post*'s Dick Dabney wrote a little over a year ago in a op ed page essay called "The Official Culture," "an entrepreneur crawls out, zigzagging like a roach in his nervous hunt for the next stipend, and scanning the horizon for that blessed day when he can at last cool it with the 'artist' dodge and become a middleman, too, gravely lunching with others of his kind, or taking dollars extorted by the IRS from a hapless welder in Akron and giving them to some sunbather who wants to write free verse on the flight of gulls and who would hate the welder if he met him, and for whom the only truly obscene four-letter word is 'work.'"

Dabney knows whereof he speaks. As he acknowledged in that same op ed page essay of July 15, 1980, he had himself applied for an NEA grant a few years before, received it, and learned first hand that there is justice in the popular stereotype of the federally subsidized creative writer as dabbler, dilettante, and bum. And as we have seen, almost all those federally subsidized creative writers who do not fit this stereotype fit another one instead, namely the stereotype of the already successful writer who is only given assistance once he no longer needs it.

But the more attentive among my readers will have noticed that the two categories of writers represented by these stereotypes are broad enough to include almost all writers. Indeed, as I read the sentence I have just typed I find myself worrying that it is overly qualified and overly timid. The fact is that these two categories of writers do include *all* writers. There are no exceptions. There could be no exceptions. How could there be a living writer of whom it *could* truthfully be said that he neither possessed nor lacked the necessary whatever it is to survive his struggle in the water and reach land? Either a writer is the type who will write and survive whether or not he is given government handouts, or he is the type who will write and survive *only* if he is given government handouts – and who will for that very reason produce no work of any importance, no matter how enormous the subsidies he receives.

This is why the investment of a billion dollars (more, actually – much more) in subsidies to The Arts over the past decade and a half has produced no works of art worth recollecting, and it is also why the Reagan administration's cutbacks pose no threat to the future of Art. The true causes of Art have little or nothing to do with The Arts. They operate irrespective of the availability or scarcity of money. As Paul Theroux put it in the September *Harper's*, what is "[f]ar more interesting than our inability to create art with money is the fact that no one, not the rankest philistine, the silliest know-nothing, the most paranoid senator, preacher, commissar, or jailer, has figured out a way to destroy it with money"—either with too much or with too little.

The only thing really threatened by the Reagan budget cuts is the overall size of The Arts, the total number of institutions which will remain on artistic and/or literary welfare. Those which go under will be those which, in the judgment of those in their communities, serve no irreplaceable function in the preservation and popularization process to which such institutions are best suited. Those which survive will survive because their communities support them, by buying their publications, attending their exhibits and recitals, and purchasing tickets to their concerts and dramatic performances. Why *should* a welder in Akron be taxed to subsidize a sunbather who writes free verse – or a performance of *Madame Butterfly,* for that matter, or any one of the dozens upon dozens of endlessly multiplying little theaters which already dot the landscape in numbers far beyond the ability of the market for drama to support them in cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco? Why should anyone be forced to pay for literature or music or theater or dance or anything else he doesn't care for? The issue at the root of the whole subject of government aid to the arts thus turns out to be the issue with which we began this lengthy and meandering discourse: the issue of whether we are for or, in Lawrence Ferlinghetti's words, "against any organization or society which dominates and suppresses the individual." In art as in life, to each his own.

In 1934, another great American writer, Ernest Hemingway, put the matter a little differently: "I believe in only one thing: liberty. . . . the state I care nothing for. All the state has ever meant to me is unjust taxation. . . . I believe in the absolute minimum of government. . . . A writer is an outlyer like a Gypsy. . . . If he is a good writer he will never like the government he lives under. His hand should be against it." And so too should be the hand of every book lover. In art as in life, to each his own.

Jeff Riggenbach is West Coast editor of *LR*.

On View

Au revoir

DAVID BRUDNOY

WINTER BRINGS THE FINAL edition of this magazine and also, as always, a more interesting crop of movies than the dregs of summer and autumn. Hollywood's finances have been brightened by the summer crop of escapist fantasies, most notably *Superman II* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (*LR*, September), but also by a handful of frothy comedies of no particular interest except to stockholders and executives of the companies responsible for them. And for those who like to spot trends, one at least is inescapable: America is taking to werewolves and superwolves, in *The Howling* and *Wolfen* (*LR*, June and October, respectively) and yet again in a film that almost succeeds in creating something of a new genre, the true horror comedy, with which we'll begin this final glance at the cinema in these pages.

An American Werewolf in London

John Landis, director, has fully absorbed the grand tradition of the cinema of transformation, a tradition stretching back decades, classically evoked in the first *Frankenstein,* in the first few variations on the theme of the werewolf, and also in some of the Dracula movies. The genre is ever alive and sometimes, as in *Nosferatu* two years ago, it is exceptionally fine both in conception and in realization. But these movies about men becoming beasts, or, in the case of Frankenstein,

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parts of men becoming beastly near-men, are generally intended as movies to frighten us. When sometimes they emerge as comic because they are so wretchedly done, they are failed serious movies. When they are designed as comic they are to a greater or lesser extent just that and that alone: funny; their ghoulish elements never alarming; they are toothless tigers. Among recent examples consider *Love at First Bite,* George Hamilton's return to popularity, a thoroughly meaningless and rather nice little bit of camp. Hamilton's blood-sucking count from socialized Transylvania is a hoot, not a howl.

Now along comes Landis with his tale of two sweet, hip, horny American Jewish college boys tramping through England, an England amply stocked with the sinister country inn, the suspicious locals, the fast-moving fog, and the full moon. David and Jack (David Naughton and Griffin Dunne) are much more interested in discussing the girls they've left behind to pick up later than in worrying about the gloom of an English evening, until they hear the baying and then, before they realize what's what, they are attacked by something that mauls poor Jack to death and leaves David somewhat marred and eventually on the mend in a London hospital. So far, so standard.

When, however, Jack, now a frightful sight, visits David in the hospital and informs his buddy quite matter-of-factly that he, Jack, is of the undead, and his fellows in that state are dreadfully boring, and that David is a werewolf and had better commit suicide forthwith, *An American Werewolf in London* begins to play with matches. If this is to be a comedy it has started off on a messy foot, with one dead American now decomposing before our eyes. Still, it can step gingerly along that path and we'll laugh for two hours and call it a day. Or, as happens, it can turn nasty, terrifyingly nasty, as Jack's prediction, repeated yet again, comes true. David is transformed, in a glorious example of the special effects capacity of today's moviemakers, and as a werewolf he slaughters, then wakes, naked, in the wolf cage at the zoo. Comedy to horror to comedy. And again to horror and more horror and still more horror and finally to tragedy.

Landis succeeds with his protagonist and with the nurse (Jenny Agutter) who tends David and loves him and eventually must mourn him. Mr. Naughton, best known for a dozen constantly repeated television ads for Dr. Pepper, is a charming lummox, a mensch, as his character's grandmother would almost certainly have called him back home in the States, and he gives off some priceless expressions when he tries to come to terms both with what he knows to be the case — that Jack is dead and there's no such thing as a werewolf, and with what he is forced to confront — that Jack is of the undead and that he, David, is at the mercy of the moon and, when in its grip and transformed, merciless and a beast. We shriek with laughter at some of the outrageous bits and we cringe in pain when things turn quite dramatically sour. The director fails to integrate the comic and the tragic, the off-the-wall and the macabre, but the effort is worthy just the same. This sort of thing has rarely been done before, and even more rarely done so well, and if *American Werewolf* is ultimately disappointing because it is not excellently integrated, it points to a type of film of which we'll likely see many in coming years.

THE SAMUEL GOLDWYN COMPANY

In a season "chockful of mindless nonsense," Glenda Jackson's portrayal of British poet Stevie Smith is a "welcome relief."

Prince of the City

Ever hear the one about the corrupt cop? Ask any cop, when he's out of uniform and into his third Bud, and he'll tell you. Robert Daley's book about corruption among the special investigations unit (SIU) of the New York police department caused the expectable stir and occasioned the expectable denunciations but withstood all that and was — and is taken — as a factual depiction of an all-too-common occurrence. Both the book and, now, Sidney Lumet's movie of *Prince of the City* suck us into a dilemma coupled with a scandal. How can we have both effective police activity against illegal drug taffic and totally honest policemen, when the activity is effective in large part to the extent that the police break the law and provide their informants with illegal drugs? This begs the question: should there be laws against drugs in the first place? America is not quite yet at the point of caring to answer that question in the negative, so we are stuck with something of a national consensus in favor of the use of police personnel and police budgets to hound drug pushers and major users. Which is where the story begins.

The names have been changed but the story in the movie is, in essence, that of the book. Officer Daniel Ciello (Treat Williams) comes only reluctantly to cooperate with the outside investigators, drawn, we learn some days into the movie's nearly three hours, by a tremendous need to confess his own criminality and to seek absolution for his sins through his undercover work. He insists only that he won't be a party to exposing or hurting his partners, though in rather short order he does both. A splendid and quite large cast of supporting players, most notably Jerry Orbach as Gus Levy, one of Danny Ciello's partners, function as the alternating poles attracting and repelling Danny as he descends into the torments of his own self-inflicted purgation. The complexity of the movie can only be suggested by listing the three strands that compose it: Danny's gradual absorption in the business of informing on his fellow officers; Danny's eventual exposure as a thoroughly corrupt policeman; and the duplicity and psychological sadism exemplified by Danny's tormentor-compatriots, the investigators who have made Danny their wedge.

Because the central figures — cops, criminals, investigators — are so rounded and intricately strung between sometimes wildly contradictory pillars of emotion and motivation and action, *Prince of the City,* even when it is most confusing and least able to bring the fullest possible dramatic force to a lengthy morality play, is never less than fascinating. It takes these men (and one woman, Danny's wife, well played by Lindsay Crouse) seriously, not as stick figures—this one good, that one weak, the other one evil, the one over there silly — but as fully human. *Prince* is a major step up from Lumet's *Serpico,* which cast all but the hero as knaves; *Prince* leaves us breathless with fury at the (perhaps) impossible problem it examines, and just as shaken by the bitter truth of Danny's defiant cry: "I'm the only thing that stands between you and

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the jungle." Indeed, Danny Ciello (or to give the character his real name, Robert Leuci) and all the cops of the world *are* the only force that, internally, separate the relatively good guys from the relatively bad. Yet *Prince of the City* reminds us that the line separating the law-abiding from the law-breaking segments of the society is not merely thin or fuzzy but sometimes utterly non-existent. As such, we cannot help realizing that the true urban horror is not an occasional werewolf in London but the quite common criminality on both sides of that thin blue line, however we cast the authorities in question, whether as cops, as the military, as the political establishment. If you leave *An American Werewolf in London* with a weird case of the shakes and the giggles, you leave *Prince of the City* enraged and exhausted and profoundly dejected.

Gallipoli

Which brings us to war, not within the nation, the war between cops and criminals, but between nations; which kind of war is almost always a war between one group of criminals, called a government, and another, ditto. From Australia, whence came these past few years some of the most remarkable examples of intelligent film — *Breaker Morant (LR,* March); *The Last Wave; Picnic at Hanging Rock; My Brilliant Career,* to name only a few—we have *Gallipoli,* directed by and from a story by Peter Weir, who also made *Last Wave* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Reduced to a sentence, the theme of *Gallipoli,* the strange name of which is familiar to those who remember their history classes but not to others except veterans of World War I, is simple: War is usually stupid. Add a second sentence and the clichés compound: War destroys the flower of youth. You may want to stop right here and go on to the classifieds in the back cover, but please don't.

For *Gallipoli,* however trite and, I trust, sensible its message, is lyric in its exposition and exceptionally fine in all its parts. It dwells on two splendid young men, runners both, blond Archy (Mark Lee) and his less glittering pal Frank (Mel Gibson), who meet at a race, tramp about a bit, and enlist in 1915 in the Australian contingent of the great deluded brigade dedicated to making the world safe for the next world war. Archy gets the lighthorse, Frank the infantry, but a bit of pluck and luck bring them together again, to meet their fate at the utterly ghastly and wholly unnecessary slaughter of the Aussie innocents in the Gallipoli campaign against the Turks. The photography in *Gallipoli,* from the first scene showing Archy training with his uncle for an upcoming race, to the last horrible frame showing one of our heroes racing forward to embrace death, is just this bit shy of too beautiful for the subject. But why cavil, when, after all, we are learning anew a lesson we ought by now to have learned. The deck is stacked: Our two young men are beautiful and innocent and decent, the authorities are cynical and stupid and haughty as only the British of the cinema can be haughty, the war is an atrocity, and no matter how gorgeously photographed it remains the chronicle of sanctified murder.

Mr. Weir takes his time getting us to our final destination, as if he is fearful of bringing his characters to their terrible end. Not much thought has gone into delineating the characters: we know only that we like Archy and Frank as we would like a favorite pair of brothers, that we enjoy watching their pals muck about in Egypt prior to the assault on the impregnable Turkish base, that we side with the boys against the seasoned men in their officer uniforms, that we carry the memories of the fun and games and joviality into the painful massacre scenes at the end. Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* tells a tragic story without frills but with meticulous attention to visual detail, and if we very much wish that Frank and Archy could in their happy days be with us longer, we accept the burden of the inevitable catastrophe that the characters confront. *Gallipoli* is maudlin and sentimental and not at all subtle. It is also very special, very effective, far more so than any but a dozen or so war films in memory.

Stevie

A little masterpiece plopped down in a few art theaters in 1979 and went away as unnoticed as it came. Then it disappeared, only to return this year to New York, pick up ecstatic reviews, and begin another voyage across the land. *Stevie,* directed by Robert Enders from a screenplay by Hugh Whitemore, based on his play and the works of Stevie Smith, offers us Glenda Jackson in her finest screen performance since *Sunday Bloody Sunday* a decade ago, and introduces most of us to the poetry of the British lady who died, at the age of 69, in 1971. Miss Jackson, Mona Washbourne as the beloved aunt with whom Stevie lived until the aunt died, Alec McCowen as Stevie's suitor, and Trevor Howard as a friend are the cast. The dialogue is at least half comprised of verses written by Miss Smith, and much of it and extensive pieces of exposition are directed to the audience. A most static movie, not much removed, evidently, from the play on which it is based.

Never mind; *Stevie* could as well have been delivered by four performers standing at a lectern if the four were these four and if their lines were these lines. What welcome relief, this sensitive and sensible sojourn with the reclusive but not hermetic Stevie Smith, in a season chockful of mindless nonsense and overpriced gargantuan blockbusters on screen. If *Stevie* does nothing but show us what acting, minus the frills, is all about, it is well worth the price of admission and the discomfort of facing the lessons it teaches. But it is quite a bit more than a poetry reading or a demonstration of the grand tradition of acting: it is a peek into the heart and mind of a woman who lived for her poetry and to share time and space and mundane, homely conversation and routine with her kindly aunt. And in the demonstration of the decency of the unglamorous life of a woman whose poems, at least those to which we are treated, gloomily propel us into some of the darker corners of the human experience, we feel the breath of death across our shoulders as we thrill to the splendor of that much underrated virtue: getting by.

Stevie (christened Margaret) Smith, called Peggy by her aunt, was no Emily Dickinson, unknown to her generation; if anything, she is less known today than she was during her last years. Nor was she a maiden lady unfamiliar with the usual pastime of adults after lights out. She held a job for some years, she went out and read her poetry at schools and literary societies, she recorded for the BBC, and she took a pretty medal from the hand of the Queen and bore up with a few minutes of polite chatter with Her Majesty at Buckingham Palace. Here the deck is *not* stacked; here we have no pathetic, isolated, and gloomy neurotic, no object for our pity. Stevie tried once to kill herself; she failed at it and went on living until her appointed hour. She made do, she got by, she made poems that will inspire somebody to put her works before us in the bookstores soon again, she endured and loved a caring old lady, and she is wonderfully well served by Glenda Jackson's performance, as is *Stevie* by the small, fine cast supporting the lead.

Stevie closes quietly and with grace, as must this column and this magazine.

_LR_'s film critic also reviews for WNAC-TV (CBS), WRKO-AM (ABC), and *The Boston Herald American*. He is host of "The David Brudnoy Show," New England's leading radio talk program, a frequent interviewer on television; and he writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column, reviews books, and lectures frequently on popular culture and politics. He serves as Deputy Sheriff of Suffolk and Middlesex Counties in Massachusetts.

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